







THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

By the Same Author

MODERN MYSTICISM. \$1.00 *net*

PARISIAN PORTRAITS. \$1.00 *net*

THE VALLEY OF SHADOWS. \$1.50 *net*

THE CELTIC TEMPERAMENT. \$1.00 *net*

THE HUMOURS OF THE UNDERMAN. \$1.00 *net*

LA VIE ET LES HOMMES (in French). \$1.00 *net*

THE
INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE
AND OTHER ESSAYS
POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND LITERARY

BY
FRANCIS GRIERSON

NEW YORK—JOHN LANE COMPANY
LONDON—JOHN LANE—THE BODLEY HEAD
TORONTO—BELL & COCKBURN MCMXIII

COPYRIGHT, 1913, BY
JOHN LANE COMPANY

FR 4728
G7 I 5

THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAMBRIDGE, U. S. A.

\$1.50

©C1A343980

CONTENTS

THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE	11
THE PROPHET WITHOUT HONOUR	31
THE NEW PREACHER	42
REPUBLIC OR EMPIRE?	60
THE PARLIAMENTARY ARENA	100
THE SOUL'S NEW REFUGE	110
IMPRESSIONS OF ITALY	121
MATERIALISM AND CRIME	132
HAMPTON COURT AND VERSAILLES . . .	142
GEORGE BERNARD SHAW	160
THE AGNOSTIC AGONY	167
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DRESS	180
BENJAMIN DISRAELI	186
SAVONAROLA	193
FRANCE OLD AND NEW	200
THE NEW ERA	213

THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

I

IN the progress of a people there are two elements which constitute what may be called their destiny — material force and spiritual power. Experienced politicians frequently foresee commercial events with striking accuracy, because they reason from a visible cause to a direct and logical result; but the material eye, no matter how keen, fails to penetrate the world of spiritual will, where the elements at work are invisible and silent, and out of which grave events often occur without any warning whatever. It is this that lends a sort of blind meaning to the word Fate.

Physical needs precede intellectual necessity, and from the physical arise the humane, the philosophic, and the intuitive; and just as soon as a nation ceases to display a sustained and sober energy it begins to lose on the side of the spiritual aspirations of Will and Intellect. India attained intellectual power after she had risen to a certain plane of material development. She rose to philo-

sophic heights, but in the ascent she forgot the needs of the material. India was caught in a metaphysical slumber, and was conquered; and China, after producing her philosophers and law-makers, lapsed into a long and peaceful lethargy.

“Place your ear to the bosom of the earth and you will feel the living throb of the universe,” says the Celtic seer, Lamennais. And similarly, if you sit perfectly still in a room in some isolated palace, you will feel the present gradually fading into oblivion, and out of the strange silence visions of coming events will mingle in a sort of whispering gallery of portents and impressions, until it seems possible to sense the destiny of empires.

I have not forgotten the impressions created by my sojourn at Gatschina. The old Marshal of the Palace, Prince Bariatinsky, one of the heroes of Sevastopol, escorted me through the immense structure. Arriving at a small iron bed in one of the most interesting rooms he crossed himself, bent his knee to the floor, and remarked: “This is the bed of my late beloved master, Nicolas I.” I stopped, and while looking with surprise at the hard, uncomfortable-looking couch, the Prince coolly remarked: “He had his

mind fixed on Constantinople." My escort gave a slight shrug of the shoulders, as much as to say he failed, and he died of a broken heart; and the Prince added as we walked away: "But we shall have Persia, and we have an eye on Manchuria."

My escort led the way upstairs to the Chinese museum. When we arrived among the splendid objects which filled a great gallery, he said again, with a wave of the hand: "There is something worth fighting for," meaning the Chinese Empire. Then I began to realise what the Eastern question meant for the people of Russia. But when we entered the throne room of Catherine the Great, with its maze of mellow light, its wonderful calm, and its fascinating simplicity, all this, united to something singularly Oriental, made me realise how unnatural Russian dominion is in Western Europe, and how much in harmony it is with Eastern thought and religion.

There will be no Russian question in Western Europe, but the time will come when Germany will possess the whole of North-western Russia, and Constantinople will belong to Austro-Germania. And here we have the question of the yellow races pressing home closer and closer. In Russia there is a Far Eastern question, which

14 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

means China and Japan; in Australia and New Zealand there is the same question, but more imperative; while on the Pacific Coast of America, from Mexico to British Columbia, the question has even now shaped itself into one of imminent peril. The whole thing seems so remote from the England we are living in that to fear trouble from that source seems like an idle dream. And yet that is where future trouble will be found. Our very existence is bound up in this question of China and Japan because of Australia directly and the United States indirectly.

It was in San Francisco in 1875 that I first had an opportunity of studying the Chinese character. There was at the time a population of 30,000 Chinese, with two large theatres of their own; but not till I crossed the Pacific on the *City of Sydney* in 1877 from California to Australia did I get a real vision of a Chinese horde on the move from one part of the world to another.

The steamer was the largest plying between the ports of San Francisco and Sydney, carrying hundreds of Chinese *en route* for Honolulu. A huge hole in the middle of the steamer permitted one to contemplate the wonderful scene. The weather was very warm, and down below, so far that it looked like another world, hundreds of limp and

listless Chinese fanned their feverish faces with great coloured fans, and from the bunks, which rose tier upon tier, hung the legs and arms of the half-stifled horde as in a picture out of Dante's *Inferno*. Most of them were reclining, while some sat cross-legged on the floor.

As I stood there, faint waves of weird Chinese music were wafted up with whiffs of sandalwood, odours that became lost in the stronger scent of tobacco smoke on deck. Then, with the setting sun, came a scene of transcendent magic. A voice rose from somewhere below, it may have been a chant of jubilant prophecy or it may have been a song of encouragement and hope, accompanied by Chinese fiddles, the rasping tones subdued and modified to a sort of uncanny wail by the partitions separating the invisible musicians from the deck; and as the song continued the colours in the sky slowly spread out into thousands of small cloudlets, filling the western heavens with a blaze of molten gold, the sun sank below the waters, the moon rose in the east, the ship glided on, the voice came and went, as if in keeping with the long, monotonous roll of the ocean, and it seemed as if I were sailing the Pacific with a band of Argonauts from the Celestial Empire in search of a new Golden Fleece in the vast untram-

melled spaces of worlds yet to be conquered. I had caught a glimpse of the Chinese avantguards. I had seen the first off-shoots of a people endowed with a patience and endurance unknown to any of the nations of the West.

No one who sits at home can possibly realise what the great world-movements are. They must be seen, heard, and sensed. To understand them we have to enter into their rhythmic action. It is not enough to read about them. All primitive national movements are symbolical. They symbolise a greater and a vaster future, and every act has a special significance.

Sir Robert Hart was the greatest authority on China. "The words 'imperil the world's future,'" he says, "may provoke a laugh, but let the words stand. Twenty million or more of Boxers, armed, drilled, and disciplined, animated by patriotic motives, will take back from foreigners everything foreigners have taken from China, and will pay off old grudges with interest."

The Chinese are now, like the Japanese, fully aware of their importance. A Japanese Ambassador has recently declared that a triple Alliance composed of England, the United States, and Japan could dominate the world. It is easy to see that in the near future new and startling alliances

will be formed, but any combination that seeks to separate England and America will be directed not only against the peace of the nations but against Anglo-Saxon civilisation in the West, and a combination that would debar either of the great English-speaking countries would speedily inaugurate a series of wars and revolutions that would devastate the whole civilised world.

II

Two things will force England and America into a coalition of material aims and interests — the menace of famine on one hand and the menace of the yellow races on the other. America can never hope to grapple with the yellow peril single-handed, England can never hope to avoid starvation without a binding political agreement with the great Republic. All other dangers seem insignificant compared with the *laissez faire* policy now in vogue in regard to this all-important question.

Yet there has never been a political agreement based on material interests alone which has stood the test of a great crisis. A commercial *entente* without a natural attraction means nothing in the hour of political and social strain. France

18 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

to-day would as soon join forces with Germany as bind her forces to any compact with Anglo-Saxon interests if the French people thought they were losing more, even a little more, than they were gaining.

Has any diplomat in this country figured to himself the position of the King were England bound to the precepts of a revolutionary Government in France? France can no more escape being governed by militant rulers in the near future than she can help being sceptical, logical, ironical, and Gallic. All political agreements with European nations are but props and crutches. Italy and Spain will follow the example of France as certainly as the sun will rise to-morrow, and even at this moment Rome is governed by a Mayor more militant than the most revolutionary Parisian.

The time is gone when the great nations will go to war like schoolboys in a passion. There will be no passion in Germany's next war. It will be a war of cool calculation. Englishmen who have not lived in Berlin do not understand the Prussian. Bismarck divorced the Prussian mind from sentimentality. The next war will be no dress parade show, but a simple affair of calculated famine. The manœuvres will be di-

rected not against the head and the heart, but against the stomach.

Just after the Franco-Prussian war some French friends of mine described the conduct of the victorious Germans during the invasion. "The Prussians," said my friends, "fought with the coolness of human machines which nothing could stop. The French soldiers fought with a passion that soon cooled, the Germans with a cold-blooded will that was crushing; when they made raids on private families in search of wines and provisions they did so with perfect politeness, but with pitiless determination." But if the Prussian in 1870 was a fighting automaton with a will wound up like a clock, what would he be now after forty years of drill, and discipline far more reasoned, far more desperate, than any training ever conceived by the Romans in their supremest triumphs?

The danger menacing England is not military. The old Roman question of feeding the populace is revived once more. We are an exception to almost every case presented in history. We are an island, and in our dreams of eternal prosperity, dreams which have lasted ever since the destruction of the Spanish Armada, we have been hypnotised into a condition of universal languor and

semi-conscious indifference. We are like men clutching at phantoms, while avoiding realities. Few seem able to see that the gravest danger lies not in anything military near us, but in the danger created by a distance of full three thousand miles of water, the danger of not having enough to eat. The old opium dreams of ease and opulence have gone on for ages, until the habit has become a second nature. This was the sort of security felt by the French nobles at the breaking out of the French Revolution, when hunger began to gnaw at the vitals of the Parisian populace. But the nobles were not saved. Nonchalance and sang-froid are effective in the senate, the drawing-room, on the Stock Exchange, and in Rotten Row. But a hungry mob pays no respect to what it considers a mixture of political debility and social callousness. Even virtue appears vapid in times of violence, and the wisest words from the wisest orators fall like so much rain on a people tottering on the verge of ruin.

At the first intimation of famine there would be a general rush for food. The farmer would soon cease to sell and begin to hide his provisions against the time of his own hunger; the people of the cities would rush for bread and flour; for the first time in England the proverb "bread is

the staff of life," would suggest something hollow and sepulchral, for the very thought of being surrounded on all sides by hostile fleets or airships would of itself paralyse the moral faculties of half the population of these islands. The certain knowledge of the close proximity of battle-ships as formidable as our own, intercepting, destroying, or delaying the merchant steamers arriving from America or the Mediterranean, would appal the most courageous hearts.¹ All would feel the crushing imminence of the new danger. Not a shopkeeper, not a butcher or a baker, not a draper or a stockbroker or a banker, not a bishop in his palace or a lord in his castle, not a publican or a politician, but would be made to realise the paralyzing effects of impending ruin. All bombast would cease.

¹ Under the heading "Key of the Empire," the *London Daily Telegraph* of June 22nd, 1912, says: "The withdrawal of the British battle-force from the Mediterranean brings this question once more into prominence, because by that route nearly half the wheat and other cereals required by the British people reaches this country. What would be the position of the Government in time of war if these supplies were suddenly cut off? More than 8,000,000 of the inhabitants of the United Kingdom are in receipt of wages of about a guinea a week, and to them a small rise in prices would be a matter of such grave moment that they might give way to panic, and the whole defensive policy of the country might be deflected in response to an uprising, and the essential victory of the fleets in the main strategical theatre might be risked by the demand for the detachment of forces to secure the safe arrival of food."

Nothing would remain as it was. The island known as England would appear like a ship parted from her moorings, gone from what seemed fixed and eternal.

To draw an antithetical picture of what would happen to the highest and lowest social grades in such an emergency we have but to scan the doomsday pages of Jerusalem, Rome, Carthage, and, above all, to contemplate the "wonders and terrors" of the French Revolution. In every instance doom was achieved by hunger. Even in cases where the city had been provisioned for a long state of siege, hunger at last was the doom of all. It is the lack of imagination that renders so many people in London, Liverpool, and the great manufacturing centres content to live on year after year in a state of chronic apathy, they, the very people who would be the first to feel the slowly accumulating horrors of starvation.

The two classes most steeped in apathy are the millionaires and titled rich on one hand and the irresponsible poor on the other; the first have many things to lose, the second, nothing but their lives, to which they would cling with frenzied tenacity. The rich live in mock security, thinking it an easy affair to escape in yachts, steamers, motors, etc. An attempt would be made to cross

the water by night, but the danger on the water would be greater than the danger at home. The first thing the Government would do would be to put the people on short rations. Then all the available orators throughout the land would talk to the people. The people! Alas, yes! For the people hate the pangs of hunger even more than the gouty member of Parliament, so often advised by his physician to starve himself for a week or two as a cure for his aches and disorders. The rich would find the first weeks of the blockade rather exciting and agreeable. But the man in the street would begin to growl on the very first day famine cast her grim shadow across his path. On him, the hungry man with a family of starving children, sermons, speeches, and reasoned editorials would produce no effect. All political parties would be blamed, and the end of famine would be a pandemonium of drunkenness, frenzy, and destruction. The Paris commune would be repeated with this difference — the ruin wrought in London would be incalculably greater.

In France the Parisian mob caused the destruction which was principally confined to Paris, but in England all the great seaports and manufacturing centres would come under the fury of the populace, rendered insane from drink taken from

the helpless publican around whose doors would swarm the sturdy vagrants and lazy hordes vomited from every portion of the land as if the lid had been lifted from some long-hidden inferno under our feet. In the universal fury and confusion one party would blame the other, rage and dismay would seize on all, a chorus of curses and vituperation would arise to drown authority and urge the remnant on to national annihilation. Forty-eight hours of cumulative delirium would wipe out a thousand years of accumulated civilisations.

III

"Tell your peoples," said Lord Rosebery in a recent speech, "if they can believe it, that Europe is rattling into barbarism, and of the pressure that is put upon this little England to defend itself, its liberties and yours."

The signs are hopeful when men like Lord Rosebery begin to tell the people the truth. He has not told all the truth, but a little will do to start with. When the speaker said: "I should like Parliament to vote supplies for two years and then pack itself up in three or four obsolete warships and go for a trip in order to find out something about the Empire," he touched a sore spot.

There are politicians who talk about Australia and Canada much as they would talk about the Pigmies of Central Africa or the "Nigger of the Narcissus." They find these countries and their people good subjects for an idle hour, but mighty boring when discussed seriously. Even now Western Canada, which is certainly the most fertile part of that splendid country, is being invaded by determined settlers from the United States, peaceably and swiftly, and it looks as if the whole of the country west of Winnipeg would before long be in possession of Americans. This of itself may force England and America into a coalition of material and spiritual forces, and what looks like a menace may turn out a blessing.

We saw, not long ago, with what enthusiasm the American Fleet was received by the people of New Zealand and Australia. This popular outburst was a sign of the times. In London it was accepted in the "blood is thicker than water" type of sentiment. But sentiment had very little to do with this singular manifestation. It was inspired by fear of the yellow man; fear and dread of a descent into Australia of the Chinese and Japanese. This is not the time to bring cheap platitudes to bear on one of the most appalling outlooks that ever confronted an old, rich, and

lethargic nation. More than thirty years ago, I spent one year in Sydney and Melbourne, and some years later I wrote and spoke on the subject of a Chinese invasion of Australasia, and was the first to bring this question before the public. War occurred between Russia and China, as I pointed out, and Australia and America are now fully aroused to the actualities of the time.

The question of war in our day is no longer a question of passion, but of commercial expansion. "Powerful influences," says the *Yorkshire Post*, "some of them pecuniarily interested, others concerned for ambitions, the exclusion of this or that commercial competition from this or that market, are constantly at work pressing forward the development of armaments, and hence the imperative need for a union of defence that shall embrace the whole Empire." But a union of the whole Empire will not turn the yellow man from the Pacific nor keep famine from England's shores.

The London *Daily News* hopes that, whether as the result of a catastrophe or not, the working men of the world will refuse to be sacrificed as the creatures of destruction. But to my mind there is no way for the people of England to escape being sacrificed in the impending Continental commercial-war expansion but a social and com-

mercial union of all English-speaking countries throughout the world. All other combinations are purely chimerical, intended for dreamers who do not understand the signs of the day, and who do not realise what is going on in the dominating centres of commerce and politics. What, for instance, would a few men-of-war avail Canada were America to declare war against England? In that case Canada would be swiftly invaded by a million men from the Western States.

On the other hand, were England, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada to federate with America in a social-commercial union, it could not make any real difference whether Canada called herself British or American, or Anglo-American. What common-sense Englishmen want is security instead of doubt, order instead of confusion, progress instead of decadence. What common-sense Americans want is the certainty of peace and progress. As for Canada arming against an attack from some European Power, the notion is absurd. The reason is obvious — America would never permit so much as the landing of a single regiment of foreign troops on Canadian soil. The truth is, as the *Evening Post* of New York has pointed out, the building of a Canadian navy will only serve to irritate and cause friction

28 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

between the two peoples, where at present there is no cause of inharmony or misgiving.

Look where we may, we cannot escape from the idea of an Anglo-International Federation. There is scarcely a limit to possible combinations and alliances against England, but only one alliance possible for England's permanent good, and no friend of Anglo-Saxon progress would think of preaching an Anglo-American alliance based solely on political and material interest. All merely political understandings are foredoomed to short life. The forthcoming Anglo-American Federation, to endure, must include four working elements in combination: (*a*) the political, (*b*) the commercial, (*c*) the religious, (*d*) the social. It would be the business of the British Parliament and the U. S. Congress to take the initiative in all matters respecting politics and commerce. These questions would form the least of the difficulties to be overcome.

It would not require much in a moment of imminent peril to cause a fusion of American and British material interests. What is more difficult and vastly more important is the work to be done by ministers of religion from English and American pulpits in conjunction with workers in the field of social, scientific, and intellectual

progress. A movement should be started which would make it possible for the leading preachers of all denominations in England and America to make periodical international visits, the Englishman preaching from an American pulpit, the American preaching from an English pulpit, having for a universal text the spiritual and social unification of Anglo-American peoples; the main part of the great work would be accomplished in a year from the day of departure. In such a case it is easy to see what would happen — politicians at Washington and Westminster would be forced to join in a movement that embraced all denominations of English-speaking Christians. In conjunction with this religious movement, the intellectual social element would harmonise and develop on the same lines.

The destiny of America is wrapped up in that of England. On the day that England sinks to a second-class Power in Europe, a European coalition will develop which will have for its prime object the partition of Mexico, Central America, and the States of South America. European expansion beyond the seas is no idle dream, since both Germany and France are now fairly embarked on colonial schemes for commercial development.

On the day England drops into a second-rate Power, America's troubles will begin; the combinations for America would present infinite possibilities, and the Chinese and Japanese questions in the Pacific would prove but a small part of the danger. There would be the combined navies of the two greatest Continental nations in Europe, and perhaps three to deal with, possibly four — Germany, Austria, France, and Italy. But far graver still is the thought that in America the foreign population is gaining on the Anglo-American population, and without the union of the English and the Americans of British and English descent the United States could in twenty years from now become absolutely detached from the sentiments and aspirations of the Anglo-Saxon mind. For this reason, if for no other, a strenuous effort will have to be made towards Anglo-American solidarity.

THE PROPHET WITHOUT HONOUR¹

THE thought has often occurred to me: what would Tolstoy's disciples, rich or otherwise, do if, by some stroke of fate, he were suddenly deprived of three things — his title, his independence, and his prestige, I mean his prestige as a prophet perpetually facing the supposed dangers of a fixed residence in Russia? What would become of him were he to land in England to-morrow possessed of nothing but the clothes on his back, with no prospect of future social or political glory? If I know the world, and I think I do, here is something like what would happen.

SCENE. — *The wealthy soi-disant Christian Socialist, Sir Percy Prim and Lady Prim, in their home.*

SIR PERCY: And so Tolstoy has actually arrived in London! We must have him here to tea.

LADY PRIM: That would be very nice, if we could get him before Lady Castlegarden has him at her house. You know what an outspoken enthusiast she is about all such things: Christian

¹ This study was written in 1909.

32 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

Science, Christian Socialism, and especially Tolstoy and his teachings, and she is sure to be among the very first to invite him; you know how very up-to-date she is, and she says old-fashioned people always make her feel weak, they "draw" from her. She is certain to pounce on him like a hungry old cat on a country mouse.

SIR PERCY: Country mouse, perhaps, but anything but a young one.

LADY PRIM: In the eyes of Lady Castlegarden young and old are all one if up-to-date.

SIR PERCY: Well, anyhow, it's about time we offered our friends something in return for entertainment they have given us lately. That last evening at Lady Kant's — quite entertaining! — although no one pretends to understand the airs and tricks of that prodigy with his fiddle, young Vichy — Vichy — what's his name? Quite amusing Lady Kant declaring that the saucy brat is not doing it himself, but Paganini is doing it through him. Quite novel, I must confess.

LADY PRIM: She draws the bow rather long, but you know she loves the sensational.

SIR PERCY: And there is Lady Castlegarden, with her mind-reader, who failed to tell the number of the banknote I had in my pocket, but

described in detail the ticket the pawnbroker gave the Duchess of Rigglesworth when she pawned a tiara to raise money to send a missionary to the niggers in Fiji. Most amusing — the silly geese! I think if we can't off-set that by showing them the greatest Russian that ever lived, a born nobleman and a gentleman, a prophet in his own country as well as out of it; if we can't go them one better on their puppy prodigies and mind-reading buffoons, the sooner we cease trying to entertain anyone the better. And, then, the one man in all the world who has made Christian Socialism respected, the man who has made the whole world look towards the Russian Bethlehem with awe and reverence — in one word, the saviour of modern society.

LADY PRIM (*opening the latest edition of the evening paper, and reading*): What's this? I can hardly believe my eyes! Tolstoy is no longer a count, and he has landed here without a penny in his pocket!

SIR PERCY: Who says so?

LADY PRIM: Here it is in the paper. He has lost *everything*, and is now no better than the rest of them. We could n't have him here without appearing flagrantly absurd and highly provincial.

SIR PERCY: Good heavens! I'm glad we knew

34 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

that in time. Had we invited the old fellow here he might have asked me for money.

Enter the COUNTESS OF CASTLEGARDEN.

LADY CASTLEGARDEN: Have you heard the news? Tolstoy is in London!

SIR PERCY: Yes, but stripped of everything, without so much as a change of clothes, everything gone, titles, estates, everything!

LADY CASTLEGARDEN: And my son Robert comes of age next week, and he has always declared he will give half his income to Tolstoy for the propagation of his teachings!

LADY PRIM: But something must be done!

SIR PERCY: Certainly something must be done, and done in time. He must be kept away from Tolstoy.

LADY CASTLEGARDEN: How fortunate! Here comes Robert now! Do you know, we were just talking about something very serious? Your idol, Tolstoy, is in London, but broken and utterly done for. He is no longer even a Russian count!

ROBERT (*coolly*): I hope I'm not so stupid as to assist a man who has nothing to recommend him but his writings.

SIR PERCY: Most certainly not! A man must

at least be a gentleman, and these writers without means are simply vagabonds in disguise — that's what I say!

ROBERT: Somehow I had an idea Tolstoyism would n't last very long.

LADY PRIM: In my opinion, when he lost his title he lost everything.

SIR PERCY *nods his head*, LADY PRIM *frowns*, and ROBERT *looks up vacantly at the ceiling*.

The scene changes. A group of successful literary men.

FIRST WRITER: So the old fanatic is actually here at last!

SECOND WRITER: "Old fanatic" sounds good, coming from one who was received in Russia by Tolstoy, and who wrote a glowing account of the visit to the *Daily Boomerang*, in which the "Count" was depicted as a man with the face and the figure of a prophet, only a little lower than an archangel.

THIRD WRITER: Well, I always knew there was no bottom in Tolstoyism. All an illusion, you see — illusion of time, place, and circumstance.

FIRST WRITER: How's that? What do you mean?

THIRD WRITER: I simply mean that Tolstoy

36 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

managed things while he was at it much as Rockefeller managed things in the oil line, and just as successfully, except that he asked for no money. Tolstoy was something more than a novelist *à la mode*; he was a great psychologist. He knew how to bring the English and Americans to his home, and how to make them talk about him after they left. What the world wants is not a poor shoemaker sitting mending shoes, but a live prophet, dressed like Elijah; only, instead of being fed by ravens, fed by a mighty good cook, and a small army of servants in attendance, with a fashionable countess to give them their orders, and to take good care that the prophet has everything his mind and body require to make his journey through this vale of tears as jaunty and luxurious as it is possible for money to make it.

SECOND WRITER: We *are* living in a picturesque age.

FIRST WRITER: Don't you think it is sentiment that has turned picturesque?

SECOND WRITER: Most men are like most women; they like sentiment, but they want plenty of "show" behind it. They want it picturesque.

THIRD WRITER: Romantic, in one word.

SECOND WRITER: Certainly, but they want their romance with all modern comforts.

THIRD WRITER: If Tolstoy's cook had fed his foreign visitors on cabbage and celery tips he would have had few callers from a great distance.

SECOND WRITER: Snobbery avoids three things — individualism, inconvenience, and indigestion.

THIRD WRITER: And that leads me to what I was going to say about Tolstoyism being founded on illusions. You know the old saw, "Distance lends enchantment"; well, this question of distance was a great factor in Tolstoy's life. When we know a man is difficult to get at, our desire rises fifty per cent in the scale of illusions. Follow this up by the illusion of place, his remote country mansion, all in the Russian style, so unlike anything in the lives of western authors; follow that up again by the peculiar circumstances of his strange existence, the flat contradictions, the impossible paradox, and I say you have enough to float the reputation of three novelists and keep them well above the Wilbur Wright line of successful aeroplane manœuvring. It is wonderful what proper management will do. Tolstoy was a great manager. He neglected nothing that could by any possibility attract the gaze of the whole world to himself. His contradictions and denials of men

38 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

of genius equal to, if not greater than, himself, was a tactical stroke in keeping with everything else in his luxurious and easy life.

SECOND WRITER: It is amazing what an attraction there is in cheap things that are not quite easy to get.

FIRST WRITER: As a proof of that, compare the miracle worker, the late Father John, with Tolstoy. Father John expected money from the rich to carry on his charitable work; he was a poor priest with no social standing, and the English and the Americans ignored the humble priest and passed on to Tolstoy, who was more difficult to reach — and cheaper. There was absolutely nothing to pay.

SECOND WRITER: Sometimes I wonder if Tolstoy did not begin by taking to heart Carlyle's saying that most people are fools, and simply acting on that.

THIRD WRITER: All the same, I'm sorry this thing has happened. Had Tolstoy remained in his old position in Russia two months longer I should have been better off by nearly four hundred pounds. I was making arrangements to go out and beard the prophet in his palatial den, take a series of sensational views, one or two sketches, something novel, my own idea, be away about a

month, spend twenty or thirty pounds, come home, and clear about three hundred and eighty, with the satisfaction of having had a rousing good time.

FIRST WRITER: Lucky thing for some people that Tolstoy was not in the boot and shoe business instead of a great landed proprietor.

SECOND WRITER: Shoemaking is not romantic enough!

THIRD WRITER: Yet, I'll bet you it's the last profession he will stick to now that he is in England dead broke.

Scene changes again. A fine country house in the Surrey hills. Rich proprietor known as a keen disciple of Tolstoy, enthusiastic, always willing to spend money on the Tolstoyan Utopia. The proprietor is sitting at his desk, engaged in writing a pamphlet on how best to disseminate the Tolstoyan idea. Enter a newspaper reporter from London.

REPORTER: Have you heard what has happened?

PROPRIETOR: Nothing very serious, I hope.

REPORTER: Tolstoy has arrived in London without a penny; his title, his estates, his social prestige, all gone.

PROPRIETOR: What! You mean to say he has nothing left!

REPORTER: Nothing but his genius.

PROPRIETOR: Great Cæsar! Then he is only another Maxim Gorky!

He sits back in his chair, stupefied.

REPORTER: He is stopping at a cheap hotel in the Strand, and has been assisted by some working-men who have pawned their watches for the purpose. They say Tolstoy must come out here to you, where he can have a good home; he intends setting up as a shoemaker, working at the usual rates at that trade.

PROPRIETOR (*gasping*): You don't mean it!

REPORTER: That is the intention.

PROPRIETOR: This takes my breath away. What am I to do? This thing has knocked me all in a heap. It is a nightmare! And, hang it all, Tolstoy on his estates in Russia is one thing, Tolstoy a beggar living on my estate is another. And, besides, fancy people coming here to have their boots mended! Why will Russian counts get broke and turn themselves into dirty mujiks!

REPORTER: Perhaps you could take him for a few days, and then pass him on to the common

working-men, who seem to have remained his warm disciples in spite of all.

PROPRIETOR (*tapping his forehead*): Stay! I have an idea. Tolstoy is an old man. He can't live long at the most and worst. His keep would not cost much. I have a vacant room in the servant's house, at the top over there, where he can mend boots and write without bothering me; and at the same time things will appear to be as they were. No one need be compromised.

REPORTER: And when he dies bury him in your back garden.

PROPRIETOR: A splendid idea! And hang it all, later on I'll reimburse myself by charging the beggars a shilling per head when they come here on their annual visits to view the grave. His drawing power is gone now, but his grave will draw later on. A splendid idea!

THE NEW PREACHER

THEY had listened to the first sermon of the new minister, and the people, now slowly leaving the church, were more than usually silent, more profoundly impressed than on any former Sunday within the memory of the oldest member of the congregation. Something had happened. The people might have been coming away from a long and solemn funeral service; but, as a young stockbroker remarked to his friend as they walked down the street, it was a funeral service with an immediate resurrection. The old was gone, the new had taken its place. The broker as he walked tried to explain.

“That man,” he said, alluding to the new preacher, “has what artists call the true magic. He tears down the false and then builds up the reality. Did you notice what an influence settled down over the congregation when he began his description of worldly actions and reactions? Did you feel the sensation of sinking down and then rising up and out into a clearer and better atmosphere?”

His companion answered that he was fully conscious of the sensation at the time, and asked:

"Does it not come under the heading of rhetorical eloquence? Is it not due to the artistry of the words and sentences?"

"All fine preaching is more or less rhetorical," was the answer; "but the sermon of the new minister had in it something both higher and deeper than rhetoric; it was full of emotion. No concoction of empty phrases and fine words will ever influence critical and sensitive people. To revive drooping plants the water must sink to the roots. Words and sentiments must touch the deepest recesses of emotion. Mere argument can never be made to influence in the same way. Cold logic is useless when you want to reach the high and touch the deep."

The stockbroker's companion admitted all this to be true, but he demanded to know how it came about that the preaching of certain revivalists, and notably that of the early revivalists, appealed to an order of mind quite the opposite to that of the mind used to rhetorical culture and classical learning. The broker stopped, and, facing his companion, explained:

"The emotion of the ordinary revivalist and

44 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

the emotion displayed by this new minister are not on the same level."

"You mean the one is dominated by a sort of blind feeling, the other by a conscious intelligence?"

"This new preacher is an artist in words."

"You mean," said the other, "that the ordinary revivalist daubs his colours on the congregational canvas while this new preacher blends his colours and uses his brush with skill and caution?"

"He does all that and more. I noticed while he was preaching how every word fit the idea, how every sentence fit every sentiment. Things were unified. His whole sermon was as orderly as a musical composition and as harmonious as a beautiful picture."

"So you think he was conscious of being the master of his sermon, instead of the sermon the master of him?"

"Impressional preaching is a good thing if the congregation is not critical. An audience of educated and experienced people have the critical faculty too strongly developed to be influenced by a preacher's impulsiveness, no matter how eloquent he may be. As soon as I know that a preacher is as critical as I am I listen to what he has to say, ready to be moved by his words if

there is anything in them superior to the kind of argument we hear every day. This new preacher is logical, but we who have lived on logic want something more. We want the thing which we do not possess."

"You mean the art?"

"I mean the art if you care to call it by that word; the art that goes hand in hand with a sort of verbal inspiration, a sort of word-magic, the sort of thing no fellow can quite explain, no matter how we reason over it. You see, the thing is too simple to be explained."

"Too simple!" The broker's companion stopped suddenly and looked the other in the face.

"Yes, it is too simple! Have you forgotten your Emerson already? The simple is always the result of the complex."

They remained silent for some time, then the broker continued:

"In every art the finest things are the clearest things; they bear a vital exterior evidence, full of significant power. When any art fails to do this it is not *fine art*; it is crude art."

"You mean to imply that the majority of preachers fail to influence their congregations because of their want of such art?"

46 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

"The vast majority fail to impress their hearers, not from lack of sincerity, or honesty, or deep conviction, but from lack of this poetic art, which means beauty united to power, conviction united to what critics call the 'creative faculty.'"

"I must admit," said the other, "that I rarely attend church simply to hear the preacher. If I know what he is going to preach about I usually know what he is going to say. I sit and listen to the old platitudes in the name of ethics, and am mighty glad when the sermon is over."

"This is true of the majority of church-goers to-day," returned the broker. "Most of us go to hear the music first; the sermon is thrown in to give the service some show of moral and religious sentiment. I confess I, too, went to church to-day to hear the music. Now I have forgotten all about the music and am still under the spell cast by the new minister, whose correct name I hardly know."

"And yet all the words he used in his twenty-minute sermon are to be found in Webster's Abridged," said the other, smiling.

"Truth on Sunday requires Sunday clothes."

"You mean the common truths expressed by the ordinary preacher are too common to impress?"

"The ordinary preacher comes before his congregation with the same sentiments, the same expressions which served him during the week. He has changed nothing. The people have put on their Sunday best, the beauty of the women has been enhanced by colour and elegance, the character of the men has been enlivened by a more fastidious attention to cut of garment, but in his words, his attitude, his moods, the preacher remains exactly what he was on the previous Friday or Saturday. *He is not on the art level of his congregation.*"

"That is a great point," said the other musingly.

"Every ineffectual effort sinks to the level of the commonplace," continued the broker; "but in these matters the simple and the common are as wide apart as two poles. Most people, in trying to be natural and simple, become ordinary to the verge of boredom."

"So you think the homely truths have ceased to influence church-goers?"

"A highly educated congregation demands something different. What we of the big cosmopolitan cities want to-day is not household preaching, but household inspiration."

"What do you mean by the word 'inspiration'?"

48 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

"Religious feeling united to intellectual imagination, added to a something which eludes definition."

"A sort of divine mood, in which the preacher and the artist are one."

"Our senates, law courts, universities, studios, and literary coteries contain more gifted men than the churches."

"The fact is," said the other with emphasis, "the rapid progress made in the world of art and music in recent years has made the efforts put forth by our leading churches look small and insignificant in comparison."

"But they have clutched at music," said the broker, "clutched at it like a drowning man at a straw."

"Yes, it is a grave error."

After a significant silence the other said:

"The mood evoked by music is transcendental. We soar on airy wings while we listen, but we descend to earth as soon as the last strains have ceased. Music entrances, but the trance is brief. The religious spirit is very different. We feel it as a waking reality. It is something we take with us from the home to the office in the city. *Music is a passion, religion is a principle.*"

"Is not fine music a good thing for the church?"

"Its true mission is to open a way. Viewed in this light, its effect is sometimes marvellous, but so is the effect produced by an application of electric power to the human nerves — a power which thrills, but does not feed. Real religion is much more than a mental stimulus."

"You mean to imply that the churches are depending on music to take the place of effective preaching?"

"They are trying to feed the people on electric shocks."

"And in the meantime the people are undergoing a spiritual famine. Some churches offer a regular Sunday banquet, where everything is present but the staff of life. As matters stand now, music is the champagne of the banquet, the sermon a fricassee composed of fish, flesh, and fowl."

"We have made great strides forward in every line of accomplishment except that of original, true, and emotional preaching," said the other, as if waking out of a reverie.

"I agree," said his companion; "but emotion in itself is not an art, but a gift. The business of the artist is to direct emotion, tone it into rhythm, and make it effective."

"We are too young to remember the oldtime

actors who used to tear a passion to tatters, or the great revivalists like Peter Cartwright who swung sinners over the jaws of Tophet until their feet touched perdition; but in giving up the old, we have taken to pulpit talk which is hardly up to the intellectual level of the ordinary scientific lecturer."

"Is that not why the majority of preachers pass in society as intellectualists without a special religious gift, and without a real spiritual mission, possessing no vital influence on the people they meet in daily life?"

"Ministers have too long flattered the people by all sorts of notions cloaked under the name of religion, in which the soul has no more place than a sermon would have in the arena of the Stock Exchange on a busy day."

"Can science and religion ever be made to mingle and harmonise?" asked the other with feeling.

"Formerly we humbugged others while we remained undeceived, but now each man does his best to humbug himself. Science has as much to do with religious sentiment and psychic emotion as it has to do with the natural flowers that grow unaided in the woods and fields. The smart man in the pulpit is no better than the

smart man on the Stock Exchange. He receives no more respect from the world generally. In taking away the grosser superstitions from religion our ministers have taken away reverence and all the finer feelings and sentiments that belong to the realm of the psychic. There is no such thing as scientific poetry, no such thing as scientific emotion, no such thing as scientific religion."

"That means that no science will ever touch even the hem of the garment of the soul," said the other.

"Quite so. *Intellectual preaching is a religious illusion*, like operatic music in the church on Sunday. There are people who think such things fill a long-felt want; what they really fill is a social vacuum on Sunday."

"Religious leaders have got hold of the wrong art," said the other, with a luminous smile.

"Worldly art," said the broker curtly. "Science is a material state of the mind, religion a spiritual state of the soul."

"The new minister possesses the last; it seemed to me he filled the whole church with an aura of religious intensity. He impressed all, even the most fashionable and worldly."

"That is because all great art is a psychic effusion."

52 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

They ceased speaking for a time. Then the broker said:

"A word is but a spark of light; a fine sentence is a thought made radiant. A splendid sermon is to a congregation what the rays of the sun are to the things of the earth. Plants grow aided by rain and sunshine; souls develop under discipline and the right words spoken at the right time. The new minister began his sermon in a sort of gloom; the clouds gathered, and at the right moment the rain descended, with interludes of sunshine to let us see that the sun exists above the clouds, and that religious happiness is not an illusion."

"Because people were never so fed up on worldly illusions as they are to-day, and I fear we are stall-fed optimists ready for the slaughter. We have listened too long to empirics who come and feel our pulse, look at our tongue, and then tell us, with a nonchalant air, that nothing ails us but a passing indigestion, advise us to go for a trip to the country or to take a long sea voyage."

"I am not sure but that an age of optimism is not an age given over to pleasure," said the other.

"Many people are optimists from intellectual conceit. Pride, ignorance, and vanity are at the bottom of most of our optimistic pretensions, and if you look at things closely you will soon see

how most of our so-called religious people are in exactly the same fix as our political parties. Before an election all parties are bursting with optimism, pretending to be happy. As a matter of fact, all are in doubt, many in a state of fear. After the election ask your political optimist if he is happy! The bitter irony! Ask your fair-weather church-goers if they are happy on the day the doctor whispers the final word that all is over with them — no more illusion, no more flattery, no more lying, no more pleasure, no more hope. Awful hour! When the optimistic catchwords sound as hollow as the cold clods falling on a coffin!”

“I think a good deal of the trouble arises from the fact that many of our pulpits are occupied by *agnostics who are groping for truth just like their congregations*. Their sermons are spiced with Spiritism, Theosophy, and mysticism, and the sauce for this intellectual pudding is called Christianity. These agnostics oppose nothing but real religion, for which they have neither feeling nor understanding.”

“Stockbrokers are called bulls and bears. I regard an agnostic in a pulpit as a wolf in sheep’s clothing; no grizzly is so formidable amidst a wilderness of souls.”

“And why?” exclaimed the other. “Because the agnostic could not hold his position in such a church six months if he did not flatter the divers opinions and beliefs to be found among the leading members of his congregation. Such a minister must be *ondoyant* and correctly vague, innocently vacillating and plausibly progressive, believing in everything, secure in nothing. As soon as a preacher pleases all the members of a cosmopolitan congregation be certain you are dealing with a man of the world who knows how to lecture, but cannot preach.”

“I make no profession of religion; my friends call me an agnostic; I have even been called a materialist; and when I go to church it is for the music. But I have never deceived myself. I do not profess to be spiritually contented. The man who is to influence me must, first of all, be convinced and contented himself. It is not possible to deceive a well-read agnostic for long; there is nothing he respects and admires so much as eloquent speech from a convinced preacher, nothing he despises more than a man of learning who pretends to know more than the agnostic. *It is not ignorance we despise; it is false claims to knowledge.*”

“But was there ever a time when the clubman

and the millionaire, the fashionable woman and the society leader, felt so near moral salvation without feeling certain of it?"

"It all results from the absurd notion that a man ought to profess a spiritual optimism on a level, so to speak, with his wealth and his business capacity."

"But it is a far cry from the bodily ease that affluence provides to an easy conscience. And, if I am to judge by my own feelings, after having made a fortune of several millions while yet a young man, I can say with some assurance that no amount of luck or progressive prosperity will ever compensate for the lack of spiritual repose. I go to books for some signs of enlightenment, to Shakespeare, Marcus Aurelius, Plato, to Emerson, but a living orator who can wrestle with the conscience of a people is worth more than books. He comes in direct contact with us, we feel his grip, we admit his superior force, we are conquered, and we shake hands with the victor as a friend."

"There are two classes of men who ought to be able to tell us what ails us — medical men and religious ministers: the one for the body, the other for the soul. The medical man succeeds fairly well, the minister fails in the great majority of cases. And why? *Because few ministers in*

56 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

our day feel certain they possess a soul. Negative themselves, they fail to bring conviction to others."

"Besides that, I see a grave danger to the churches in presenting, as some leaders are doing, the subject of immortality in a purely material light. In their efforts to prove immortality they have created in the minds of many worldly people an atmosphere of security that fringes the borders of every selfish vice. I once met a business man who had been a Congregational minister in a large town. Some of the leading members of his congregation were inclined to be doubting Thomases. He hit on the notion that a series of sermons based on psychical manifestations as proofs of the soul's survival would be just the thing for the doubters. He preached for four Sundays on this subject, and at the close of the series had the doubters so well convinced that several of the richest ceased to take an active interest in religion. They no longer feared anything, declaring that the other world being just like this one, it was needless to worry about the soul's future. The pastor left the ministry for a business career; he could no longer raise the necessary funds to keep the church going."

“Preachers who attempt to reduce the spiritual to the plane of the material must always fail. It is madness to convince a man who is already a lover of self that he is going to live on unchanged after death. Preachers who do this may be sincere, wise they are not. The new minister we have just heard is not one of these. What we want to-day is not the grosser proofs of immortality, but the finer, more spiritual proofs. We want to get hold of the true feeling, the aspiration of continued spiritual progress — I hardly know what to call it. I should be sorry to think that things go on after death as they do here; it would make me more selfish than I am now.”

“And that brings up the subject of charity and utilitarianism.”

“What in reality is the thing called utilitarianism?”

“In my opinion, it is a multitude of sins under a cloak of wholesale charity. It is so easy to give wholesale, so easy to order things by the gross, so bothersome to handle them in detail.”

“Is not mechanical charity an insult to all the recipients?”

“It is charity without spiritual sympathy, it is goodness made automatic, virtue made hypocritically vicious, penny-in-the-slot religion, all

58 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

the more dangerous because the machine works so smoothly."

"I object to it just because it is so cheap," said the other with a bitter tone.

"What the wealthy utilitarian lacks is sentiment."

"But is he not often a sentimentalist?"

"*Sentiment gives distinction*, sentimentality is as crude as it is blind. This is why your wealthy parvenu gives so much to public institutions. He thinks he is buying distinction. Note that he or she always takes care to give to something that is, or will be, popular."

"Don't you think that as soon as the wholesale utilitarian philanthropist realises that giving to public institutions is a sign of decadent taste, to say nothing about judgment, the custom will cease?"

"The custom will cease as soon as the custom is regarded as *bad form*. Society has placed a ban on the person who eats with a knife and drinks wine out of a cup. I see the day coming when the ostentatious giver will have no place in refined social circles."

"And this brings us to a main point: the State will be compelled to maintain universities, hospitals, libraries, and all institutions connected

in any way with public utility. Individuals will cease to be utilitarians. The rich will turn their attention to work of a distinctly private nature. Struggling men and women of talent and genius will no longer be objects of charity; they will be sought out and made to realise that their efforts are not in vain; poets, artists, philosophers, scientists, musicians, preachers with a gift will no longer languish in obscurity. The gifted will take their proper place in the world's work; they will cease to be the tools of cunning avarice and high-handed greed, the playthings of ignorance and pretentious fashion."

REPUBLIC OR EMPIRE?

I

SCENE: A private room in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York. Coffee is being served after a sumptuous dinner. Persons present: A senator, a judge, a general, an ex-ambassador, an episcopal rector, a professor of history, a professor of psychology, a multi-millionaire. They had come together to welcome home the man who had been an ambassador only a short time before, and after some speeches the company settled down to the ordinary talk of the evening.

"It is a great and moving subject," remarked the senator (taking a couple of whiffs at his cigar), "a very great subject. When you pronounce the word Empire in a country like ours you bring into play the greatest stops of the organ; you sound the trumpet notes of heroism, romance, and adventure."

"I should say," said the judge, "it includes much more than that. An American Empire would involve the whole world in its meshes. Were we ruled by an emperor, not only all the

present social factors would be changed in our country, but Europe and Asia would be involved in the progressive changes, the flux and the reflux of political, religious, and material development."

The judge, as he ceased speaking, extended his arm, eyed his cigar with deliberation, brushed the ashes off with his fat little finger, while every member of the party watched him as if he were about to deliver judgment in a case of life or death.

The judge was one of those men who exert a ponderable influence by "heft." He was a political heavy-weight. The bulk of his body sustained and balanced his words, his looks, and his gestures, while the senator, who was thinner and taller, was a physical feather-weight, whose muscles were in his brains, and whose knock-downs were in his arguments.

There was a pause, as there usually is in cases when a grave question has been suddenly brought on the tapis, and the listeners are taking soundings in the shallows of their own ignorance. Evidently, by the shifting of legs, and slight, but significant, clearings of the throat, most of the party were beginning to "sit up."

"Do you know," said the professor of psychology, with a rather serious smile, "I always think

there is something in the quality of the wine that decides or influences these after-dinner discussions." To which the ex-ambassador replied good-humouredly: "You look at the champagne label before judging the import of the conversation."

"We have been drinking Veuve Clicquot this evening," returned the professor, "and I have little fear of the quality of the conversation. If we are going to discuss the question of an emperor in this country we should do it with 'unmuddled heads.'"

"And, I should add, with strong nerves," said the senator.

"It takes moral courage to face the subject under any circumstances," retorted the judge.

"Is this question not in the air?" It was the professor of history who asked the question.

"It is in the air, but not yet on people's tongues," remarked the senator. "We require to breathe microbes before we feel their effects; the incubation always takes time"; but the rector said, "Now that this question has been brought frankly before us I am reminded that a good many people have lately been feeling Imperial without knowing just how to describe their feelings."

"Perhaps the time has come to diagnose the

symptoms," put in the psychologist. "Is it, or is it not, a disease?"

"You touch a vital point," chimed in the judge. "It would be impossible to over-rate its far-reaching importance. If it is a disease, everything depends on whether it is 'catching' or not."

The psychologist now spoke with much animation: "We know that 'fashion' is nothing but the working of one imagination on the mind of another. One or two persons fix upon a certain fashion, then groups begin to imitate the thing that is set before them, after which the public fall into line, and no one questions the utility or the futility of the fashion imposed."

"That is true," declared the senator; "if we are destined to have an emperor it is but a question of who begins to suggest the 'Imperial' game — merely a question of time. What is in the heart will one day be expressed by the hand." He suited the action to the word by lighting a fresh cigar.

"Not long ago," said the rector, "I heard a clergyman say that fully eighty per cent of his congregation were secretly ready for an Empire." He gave a furtive glance at the company.

The rector despised Democracy, not so much because he thought it all wrong, but because his

64 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

secret inclinations opposed it. With him, as with the class he represents, Democracy was not so much a thing to be feared as a thing to be shunned.

As for Socialism, he would as soon think of learning Chinese as of reading up the philosophical and economical arguments of its leaders. The rector stood for a large and powerful class that rule in the social circles of New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Boston. His class stand for the letter as opposed to the spirit, the form as opposed to the substance, manner opposed to method. In their eyes the Episcopal Church is a barrier against what they deem the common and the vulgar. In America it is the only symbol of royalty left after the Declaration of Independence. Deep down in the bosom of all good Episcopalians there remained, and there still remains, the secret sympathy with the old manners, the old beliefs, the old social habits and customs. Between the intellectual Unitarians of New England and the Episcopal Church, as represented in cities like Baltimore and Philadelphia, there is the difference of a whole world. With certain Episcopalians aristocracy has much to do with class, little to do with intellect.

"You mean to say," remarked the ex-ambas-

sador, "they are weary of the present social conditions; tired of doubt and that chaotic equality which nothing seems to mollify, and that they would welcome any change that would clear the social air."

"It would take a mighty big thunderstorm to do that. Our country is big." It was the general who spoke.

"It would take a series of thunderstorms that would reach from New York to San Francisco and from Chicago to New Orleans," added the judge.

"It would all depend on the actual mood of the people," declared the senator, "or the mood of the class with the most power."

"And these would, of course, be influenced by the actual political and social conditions of the time. It is a complicated subject," saying which the judge leaned back in his easy-chair, and with a grimace in which his mouth, nose, eyes, and eyebrows all played a part, he slowly puffed a long cloud of smoke towards the ceiling; and again he riveted the gaze of the whole company.

The ex-ambassador, becoming restless, asked of the senator, "What, in your opinion, is the cause of a people's mood?"

"A nation's moods are exactly like the moods of an individual," he replied, with a nonchalance

66 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

in which a glow of nervous energy was manifest from the deep sockets of his grey-blue eyes. "A nation has its whims, caprices, humours, like private persons. The statesman who ignores this simple fact is a man who has not mastered the art of governing."

"Fashions again," said the professor of psychology. "The need of change, the dislike of monotony, the love of pomp and show inherent in all human nature, the same spirit that creates the fashions creates the political and social moods."

"Action and reaction," said the judge, fixing his gaze on the professor. "Every law passed is an act which is bound, sooner or later, to produce a reaction in some form. Too much Democracy is bound to produce a reaction towards aristocracy; too much aristocracy is bound to revert to Republicanism, as in France; but if France ever goes to war with Germany, and is beaten, Germany will impose a Monarchy on France, and that will be her reaction."

"I agree," said the professor of history, "there is nothing else in the world on which we can safely reckon. History means nothing else. In 1789 French Democracy reacted against the Monarchy; then Bonaparte caused a reaction against Democracy and founded an Empire, after which there

was a reaction in favour of the Monarchy, which again gave place to the rule of Napoleon, after which another reaction came with the third Republic. In our country we have tipped to the see-saw of the two parties — the Republicans and the Democrats.”

The senator moved in his seat, and, raising his eyebrows, asked in a voice that implied something more than the ordinary, “Do you not concede the reign of a moral law in all this?”

“There is no chance,” replied the professor of psychology; “there must be law, or the world would go to pieces. We speak of anarchy and chaos because these loose terms suit our feelings and manner of speech for the time being. Passion runs away with reason, but after the event we have time to consider and weigh. All history, to my understanding, is but the working out of destiny, and nothing that philosophers do or say ever hinders its march. We are ignorant partisans watching the game of the gods, the stupendous show of the flux and reflux of cities, nations, republics, crowns, and empires.”

“I wonder,” said the professor of history, “if people will ever consent to lead the simple life?”

“We might as well ask if people will ever be

68 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

content to mind their own business," said the ex-ambassador, with a twinkle in his cold blue eyes; but the judge caught him up with the retort, "Sir, an ambassador is one who is sent to induce other nations to mind their own business while he takes advantage of their absent-mindedness by attending to his and theirs at the same time."

The rector was fascinated by the look, the tone, and the solid posture of the judge, as weak birds are fascinated by the sight of snakes; and he was thinking to himself how fine it would sound when in the Prayer Book on Sunday he would be able to read the prayer for the preservation of his Imperial Majesty the Emperor of the two Americas instead of the prayer for the plain President, which always sounds flat, especially to the ears of the fashionable female members of his Philadelphia congregation after their return from protracted visits to England.

As for the general, he had never given the subject any thought, being a practical man engaged in the common-sense attitudes of civil and military government, but he could not help wondering how he would look seated on a spanking charger as aide-de-camp to his Imperial Majesty, and he concluded that it would, to say the very least, be

exceedingly picturesque and curiously romantic; and just as this thought was passing through his mind the multi-millionaire remarked, with a cynical smile which harmonised well with the utter absence of any sign of illusion or poetry in the expression of his face, "People will consent to any form of government if you ensure them three full meals a day and plenty of eye-show."

But the senator differed.

"That," he said, "is true of the unlettered crowd, but in this country there is the religious element to count with. At present there are only two vital forces in America: the one is finance, the other is the churches. The first represents the financial attitude of cities like New York, Chicago, and Pittsburg; the second represents the sentiments of the agricultural population, the country towns, the small dealers and the professional classes with local powers. Some of these would die sooner than live under an Empire."

"That is true," remarked the judge; "but all history is full of examples of sudden changes of government, and the people at large have always acted pretty much the same. What can people do under stress of power? The old history repeats itself. There is a great outcry for a time.

Then people settle down after getting weary of futile opposition."

The general, now fairly interested in the subject, remarked, "An American Empire would be impossible unless it included all South America. If we ever become an Empire we shall be a great naval power, with an army to match our navy, and we should repeat in the two Americas what England accomplished in India. It seems wonderful when we think of it, how it was done."

"What makes present social conditions in America so interesting is the unprecedented complexity of the social, political, and religious elements. It is futile to go back to Athens and Rome for parallels. Never in history have the social elements been so mixed, so inextricably mixed." The professor of history spoke these words with intense seriousness, and the judge and senator were about to reply at the same moment; but the senator rose to his feet, and the company saw before them the dominant mind of the evening, tall, solemn, with a presence that some would describe as serenely satanic and others as serenely Imperial, and as he loomed above the sitters he seemed an enigmatic oracle of the present and a prophet of the immediate future.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I agree with the sen-

timent expressed by the supreme bard of the English-speaking races when he said, 'There 's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will.'"

He paused here to give the company time to imbibe all they possibly could of that mystical truth. Then he continued:

"By these words the poet included individuals, peoples, countries, nations, and empires. He meant them to apply as much to parties as to men, as much to politics as to principles. Meditate on the marvels of the past, think of Rome, Carthage, the invasion of the Moors, the Spanish conquest, the Declaration of Independence, the apparition of Bonaparte, the advent of Abraham Lincoln, the freeing of the slaves, the war with Spain, the acquisition of the Philippines, the imbroglio with Japan, the incommensurable theme of the yellow race wrenched from the rock of Asia to be cast before us as a token of defiance, or a stimulus to conquest, and then tell me whether you are sleeping or waking; whether you are standing on the brink of a precipice, or dreaming in a fool's paradise of transient pleasures and ephemeral passions. Gentlemen, we are at the dawn of a new era. We resemble Columbus and his crew just before they sighted the shores of the New World. The tide

of Empire is rising. Whither will it land us? When it recedes will it carry us with it far beyond the islands of the Pacific? Will it sweep us on and on till it touches the shores of Eastern Asia?"

It would be difficult to depict the conflict of sentiments, hopes, fears, vague desires, and slumbering ambitions evoked by the senator's startling and enigmatical outburst. The judge, who had been quietly puffing at his cigar, was now chewing its stump, and his face showed all the symptoms of a suppressed and suffocating emotion. The general had become visibly agitated in spite of his seeming coolness and indifference, while the multi-millionaire, his round face flushed with the varying emotions of the discussion, could hardly keep his seat.

"If you want to know how I feel about it, I can tell you," he said, the wrinkles between his hard grey eyes making one think of three furrows in a field of thistles. "It is a question of expediency. If the financial interests of the country are better served by Imperial power, then let us have an Empire and be done with it. I have always been a democrat. Let everything go by the board sooner than become a nation of money slaves depending on Europe for supply and demand. It ain't a time for guess-work, it's a time

for action. I have made what money I possess, but I want more; we all want more; we want to push the thing clear through from Australia to China and Japan and from there to the Pole. I don't care a hang who leads the people. President or emperor won't make any difference."

"It seems to me," said the judge, "it's a case of hanging our banners on the outer walls."

"For the cry is still they come," smiled the professor of history.

"And you can take my word for it," added the general, "we can afford to let 'em all come."

"We have been doing that for some time," remarked the rector.

"Assimilate Republicans and Democrats, Catholics and Protestants, transmute the tendencies and turn all into a rollicking Empire headed by the strong man," went on the judge.

Several members of the company left the room, and the discussion on that subject was at an end, but not the thoughts and the impressions. More than one of the party lay awake till late brooding over the portents of the future in America, in Europe, in Asia, in the whole world.

II

Scene: A library in a Fifth Avenue mansion, New York. Tea is being served. Persons present: A bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, a governor of a Western State, a Social Democrat, a lawyer from Kentucky, a Trust magnate, a Christian Socialist, a mining millionaire.

"There are times," said the bishop, sipping his tea, "when it looks as if we were being pushed or driven by some inexorable influence not properly belonging to our people as free political agents in a country where instruction has for years been at the command of all. I can well remember the ante-bellum days. The character of the people has changed."

"It must be so," remarked the Trust magnate; "all new countries go the same road."

"Progress!" ejaculated the lawyer.

"That word, in our day," said the bishop, "is void of religion and void of sentiment. What do they mean by progress?"

"The betterment of all classes, particularly the classes that have for ages been held in the bondage of the rich and the strong," said the Social Democrat. "So long as the people suffer, the discoveries of science do no real good and nothing really matters."

"A nation has to become powerful before she can help herself," remarked the lawyer. "A nation that is playing second fiddle can never progress. Progress begins when we are absolutely free to create our destiny."

"We are a sentimental people like the English," said the Trust magnate, with a frown that seemed fixed and immovable; he wore it as he wore his clean, straight, upper lip which met his lower lip like a carving-knife, and gave to his light-grey eyes the trenchant quality for which they clamoured. He carved his phrases from the joints of the argument in choppy slices, which often passed as *bonnes bouches* at the boards of political and social discussions, and he reasoned, argued, lived, and even loved in the "dry light." "There is too much sentimental vapour in the national atmosphere," he went on; "it prevents us from seeing. We must get rid of poetry, malaria, artists, indigestion, temperance, and woman's rights before we become a nation."

"Then we shall never become a nation," said the bishop.

"And when we are rid of dyspeptics, artists, and poets, to say nothing of the other things," said the governor, "apoplectics will take their place. Our capitalists are even now in the apo-

plectic stage, and those who are not suffering from a rush of blood to the head have symptoms of water on the brain." He spoke with his habitual good humour, and the bishop replied in the same mood: "Better water on the brain than whisky, governor; and as for woman's rights, we have to thank our brave women for what progress we have made in the drink question. The salvation of this country is in the hands of the women."

"As for drink," said the lawyer, "it works two ways: it makes some people devils and others angels or pet lambs; what is poison for devil is sometimes food for angel."

He spoke from the depths of a thick dark beard capped by a bushy moustache which gave to his small bead-like eyes the aspect of a black snake ensconced in a crow's nest. His attitude was formidable. The lawyer was not a "spell-binder," his speech was too laconic; but there was something in the expression of his eyes which put a spell on weak-kneed politicians at Washington and sitters-on-the-fence at New York. His very presence in a committee-room gave sensitive people a feeling of "pin-feathers," while others went so far as to declare he was Satan unbound.

The Trust magnate listened to the lawyer and

was silent. He was doing his best to get at the true inwardness of this man who was living in the "dry light" of hard fact and impersonal logic, and he could not restrain a feeling of repugnance as he thought to himself: "I wonder if I look as mean as that." Then he thought: "Better look like the devil than an ineffectual angel; American economy has no place for Christian doctrine."

"You can cut and dry apples and peaches and find them very good," remarked the governor, "but you can't make anything out of human beings by the cutting and drying process."

"There is no better way," said the bishop, "than first to catch your sinner, then 'convict' him, then convert him. This was the way of the early Methodists. I have witnessed thousands of conversions on the old camp-meeting grounds in the West and the South. I am opposed to force and in favour of argument, persuasion, and conversion. This nation must be converted back to the simple old customs of the early churches, and all this outcry about a Monarchy or an Empire must cease or we shall be shortly incorporated forcibly in some sort of paganism."

"Before we can get back to a simpler life," said the Social Democrat, "we must first deal

78 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

with material things. We have worried too long over the spirit. The spirit will take care of itself once the body is set free. We have been trying to live on compromises, and we become leaner every day."

"But the fabric must have a solid foundation," said the Christian Socialist. "The thing we need is Socialism based, not on mere material figures and systems of government, but on the absolute rules of simple Christian teaching. Socialism without religion would be as a rose without colour or odour."

"I am with you in that," remarked the bishop. "When it comes to the actual fighting time all good Methodists will take sides with any form of Socialism founded on the Christ spirit. In my opinion we shall soon be called on to take sides, not in theory, but in practice; we shall soon be forced to show our hand."

"No doubt about it," said the lawyer. "We are in a political and social hot-house, where the heat is more than tropical and things are being forced along at an extraordinary speed; and I don't object to speed myself. Speed is a stimulant to mind and body. The quicker we get away from all the refuse heaps the better. We have been going at a trot of sixty miles an hour. I

should like to see it changed to a canter of ninety."

"You would empty the Imperial quarts into a decanter, eh? and let all taste the vertigo of life," said the Trust magnate, with a grin that hardened optimists might have mistaken for a smile.

The multi-millionaire gave a loud guffaw and said: "See that you fellows take a return ticket; after you 've had enough of Empire you may want to get back to a Republic"; to which the governor replied: "You don't mean to say the Imperial game can be played as you play football? If ever we get an Empire it will come to stay; there won't be any ins and outs, but a thing the whole nation will get used to and fight for."

"Gentlemen," remarked the bishop bluntly, "there will be no Empire without reckoning with many millions of Methodists, Baptists, and Congregationalists, to mention only three denominations."

With these words the Social Democrat took from his pocket a recent copy of the *Louisville Courier Journal*, and began to read an editorial by the editor, Colonel Henry Watterson, one of the great editors of the world.

The governor straightened himself in his seat and exclaimed: "I find it amazing that a great

editor should have to ask the question, 'Is Representative Government in America a failure?'"

"Governor," said the lawyer, "you seem to talk as if you were amazed for the first time; I have not known what it is to be amazed since I was a boy of fifteen. When we are surprised it shows that we have not profited by experience; a man who is overtaken by surprise is, in my opinion, a man who is at the mercy of any incident that may happen at any time anywhere. A successful man in our day should be ready for anything. To feel surprise is sufficient proof that you are not ready."

"A man who is learning every day is not yet ready for effective action," said the Trust magnate. "The successful man in these days is the man who has ceased to fear."

"It is all a matter of knowing human nature," remarked the mining millionaire. "Human nature never changes," he went on, with a broad and self-satisfied smile. "The poor man complains, but if the poor man was in our place he would feel just as we do; he would want more, and be bound to get it if he could. If we millionaires know how to stick to our guns it is because we understand. And besides that, there is something

in the nature of things that makes people what they are."

"Do you mean to say," asked the bishop, "that millionaires are predestined to be what they are, and that they follow a sort of divine law?"

"Well, yes, if you like to consider it that way. The big millionaires of our time occupy the place the kings used to occupy. In these days we give the orders and the crowned heads obey," saying which the mining king broadened his smile to an extraordinary degree and in a manner not to be described, it was so bland, so self-confident, so all-embracing.

"Things have shifted," remarked the lawyer drily. "The power once vested in princes and crowned heads is now vested in commerce and speculation. Diplomacy is now in the hands of the manipulators of cotton, wheat, town-planning, trust-building, irrigation schemes, and railroad management; and to these things will soon be added ship-building and a vast commerce with Asia and South America. The political diplomat has been forced into a back seat. Every move of the diplomat is made at the dictates of the money market. State-craft is money-craft."

"Because we are mostly in the hands of Satan, and we are nearing the hour spoken of by the

82 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

prophets," said the bishop. "The descent has been rapid, but the awakening will appal by its suddenness. The first will be last and the last will be first; America is not ruled by the people, but by Mammon. The people are being deceived, not by sentiment but by the policy of money grubbers. God Almighty has willed two sorts of government for the human race: government by light and government by darkness. The worst things live in the dark. It is much easier to live according to impulse and passion than it is to live controlled by wisdom. The Greeks began to decline as soon as they sought to make worldly knowledge take the place of the laws of the spirit and the simple life. Knowledge alone is the most dangerous thing man can handle. We in America, as well as the English, are suffering in the bonds of worldly knowledge, and our learning and our science are cheap substitutes for wisdom. Science is still a mystery which has explained nothing that is of any vital importance to the human soul. It can never be made to explain the beginning of things, neither can it explain any end. People who live under the authority of science may learn how to destroy microbes and build wonderful machines of destruction, but under this rule we are growing more barbarous, more arrogant, more

restless and discontented. We borrow all the old vices of the old countries without the seeming contentment and repose of the older peoples. We have got rid of the idea of equality since our rich people consider themselves better than the others, and learned men obtain no footing in our leading social circles.

“When you millionaires visit the old country you are tolerated because of the money you fling about to the servants of the nobility, and because of various other things all touching on the fatness of your pocket-book. You are too blind, your heads are too swollen for you to feel your position, to realise your humiliation. As for the feeling of patriotism, you have lost that. The words democrat and republican mean with you not love of home and country, but love of money, worldly power, and the perquisites of Mammon. We were at one time used to the comforts of a free and sober people, but now we are used to the luxuries and the licence which rapacious idleness and vacuous ambitions bring, and there are no signs of any decrease in the luxurious expenditure. On the contrary, the spirit of extravagance is manifest everywhere in all parts of the land. Your boasted equality is a sham. You refuse to meet a man on his merits. You fear the few people who

84 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

are still left who have the moral courage to tell you your vices; and this is but natural, since you think that money ought to be made to atone for wickedness in any shape; but in the day of reckoning there will be no atonement."

Here the bishop fixed his look on the Trust magnate: "Your evil deeds will live after you. Nothing you can do on your death-bed will atone for the evil example you set now. There will be retribution, and your children and your children's children will feel the yoke of your evil doings. You talk lightly of Empire, and consider that nothing matters as to the form of government we live under so long as you amass wealth, and you seem to be willing to welcome any change of government that will promise still more licence. This is all very natural. You have been on the down grade so long that it is only natural you should hasten to touch bottom. In my opinion you will, before long, receive an impetus in your journey towards catastrophe. You live in palaces which will prove no refuge in the hour of danger and distress; for in that hour the poor will not pity you, and the people of your own class will be too occupied in looking to their own separate and individual interests to care a fig what becomes of the others. You will, sir, when the hour of

judgment strikes, find that your friends the millionaires, who now show no pity or love for people in humbler walks, will show no pity or love for you and yours. Judgment will compass you with the force of a tidal wave, and although you may purchase your ransom for a time your gold will fail to bring you to your freedom."

The bishop's words came with such unexpected force that no one could find a reply. His remarks illuminated the minds of the company, and at the same time closed their mouths. The Trust magnate, his vanity stung to the quick, looked at the mining millionaire and hoped he would off-set the bishop's words by one of his cool, happy-go-lucky observations that usually came to him with such ease, but the mining millionaire had wilted in his seat. He felt like a guilty one in a court of justice. He felt that, for the first time in his life, judgment had been pronounced in his case. The Trust magnate felt as if he would suffocate if he sat in that room for another five minutes, and just in the nick of time the governor turned the talk to another subject and the bishop rose to go. The Christian Socialist remarked to the bishop: "If our preachers would preach as you have talked this evening how much better people would be."

III

Scene: A palatial mansion near Central Park, New York. It is four o'clock in the afternoon.

The Marquis of Roehampton is seated in a room which suggests to him the aspect of an audience chamber. There is a canopy under which stands a large chair carved in figures which symbolise royalty. The room is in fact half throne-room, half salon, and the objects in it represent a large fortune. As the Marquis, son and heir of the Duke of Ballywick, sits musing, he asks himself what sort of a dress the hostess would appear in to-day. He had seen her many times, but never twice in the same dress. The Duke and the Duchess were urging him on to marry this woman, the possessor of so much money that no one could say within twenty or thirty million dollars what her fortune was. He felt that he was beginning to appear ridiculous. He was half in love with the woman he had been courting for more than a year, yet he feared her as a human enigma who might turn out to be a minx as well as a sphinx, and he was beginning to feel worried as well as interested.

With these thoughts rushing through his brain the hostess made her appearance.

She was seven-and-twenty. Her eyes looked very dark under her dark and rather thick eyebrows, and her olive complexion never showed the slightest trace of colour, no matter what the excitement of the moment might be. She was tall, her figure was well-proportioned, but she had practised certain movements and attitudes so long before the looking-glass that she often appeared theatrical and self-conscious, and self-consciousness was the thing above all others she most dreaded. She was, in fact, suffering from a complaint quite frequent in the society in which she moved, a complaint which might be described as the disease of the "ever present." She had not yet invented a way of escaping from herself. Night and day she was haunted, not by spirits freed from the flesh, but by her own spirit imprisoned in her own body.

The hostess was arrayed in the strangest oriental costume the Marquis had ever laid his experienced and much-travelled eyes on. It was a combination of Turk, Persian, and Hindoo, and on her head rose a turban head-dress in the form of a pyramid festooned with ropes of black pearls. She advanced towards the Marquis with a forced air of languor and indifference, and held out her hand for the Marquis to kiss. This he did, saying

88 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

to himself what an idiotic attitude for an Englishman, the colour mounting to his cheeks as he thought: "That petty German prince and that poor French duke in search of a situation have taught her this trick!"

"How perfectly radiant you look to-day!" he said.

The words coming to her at the moment they did, and in that peculiar condition of airs and elements, the hostess forced her mouth into one of those hard, mechanical smiles which she felt must resemble a hideous grin, but on the instant her face relaxed into its natural expression, which was one of restlessness and a vague ill-defined ambition, embedded as it was in a foundation of hereditary ennui. As a girl she had never laughed, and as a woman she could not smile.

To-day the hostess had decided to lay the law down to the Marquis. It was useless for a woman in her unique position to mince matters with anyone, and after the Marquis had for the twentieth time broached the question of marriage, she said: "I shall never marry you unless you consent to sign a written agreement that I shall be appointed the leading lady of honour to the Queen of England. American girls who marry English lords are in my opinion no better off than they

were in America. If I marry you I shall renounce forever all connection with Republicanism"; but just as the hostess uttered these words, and the Marquis had made up his mind to bring the absurd courtship to an end and return to England, a butler, with a pompous mien and a stentorian voice, announced His Royal Highness the Duc de Bordeaux, and in walked a spruce young man, whose age was about that of the hostess.

The Marquis took his leave, and the Duc de Bordeaux, after having kissed hands in the most courtly manner, found himself enveloped in the meshes of political and social intrigue.

The hostess was, after all, getting somewhat bored with the same mechanical compliments uttered day after day, and the Frenchman was too subtle a judge of human nature not to know when to desist. "I have good reasons for believing there will soon be a return of the Monarchy in France," he began. "The Republicans are growing weak, and the Socialists are threatening landed proprietors with utter ruin, and our cause never looked so bright. If you will marry me and bring your great fortune to bear on the political situation in Paris we shall have a restoration of the Monarchy within two years. Nothing can resist the power of such a fortune as yours."

Here the Duc named the journals in France which he knew could be subsidised in favour of the cause, and the hostess listened with all the sang-froid at her command. She looked coolly at the Duc for some time, and at last she said: "What you say of France fits America about this time. I hear that in this country people are growing tired of Republicanism, and the Democrats are weary of Democracy." But the Frenchman, reading her thoughts, cut short her remarks: "In America you have to create a Monarchy or an Empire, while we in France have a Monarchy and an Empire ready and waiting. We have the titled aristocrats to give the proper social atmosphere to the throne. If you wait for an Empire in America you may wait a lifetime, and even then —"

"Well, I don't know about that," she replied. "I prefer being a princess in my own country in my own right to being a titled woman in Europe just because my husband possesses a title. I prefer being original. My French coiffeur told me this morning that I shall look young at forty. If we become an Empire I shall be created an Imperial princess in my own right, and I shall set up a court in Washington. I don't know but what I shall wait ten or twelve years and see. The other day a senator told me the fear of So-

cialism is so great that the millionaires will plan to bring about a *coup d'état* in America. They will stand anything but a Socialistic Republic."

The Duc replied: "If you become the Duchesse de Bordeaux and the French Monarchy is re-established, I can promise you the position of first lady at the French Court. With my social position and your fortune you will be without a rival. Should the king die I shall occupy the throne and you will be Queen of France."

"How delightful!" thought the hostess to herself, image after image whirling through her brain. She was for the moment intoxicated with the illusions of the actual situation, with these arch-aristocrats kissing her hand, and the prospect of one day being Queen of France, and in the mad wave of cerebral excitement and neurasthenic folly she forgot the spruce, unkingly-looking Frenchman seated before her, and, although she seemed to be gazing straight at him, she was seeing herself in a royal mirror of the future, and she thought: "Only by being a queen seated on a throne can I ever get even with these New York women. Oh, to see them walk before me, bowing low while I sit on the throne, just as I had to do when I was presented to Queen Alexandra! What a memory it would be to humble that pretentious

young upstart who has just married two hundred millions, and that old, false goddess who expects the four hundred to do salaams before her altar! I'll show them some day what I think of a Republic."

In the midst of such thoughts in walked a banker's wife and her daughter — the daughter a languid blonde with the manner and look of a young woman of intellectual distinction and aristocratic tastes. The banker's wife belonged by nature to the money set, and could not, to save her life, keep out of it; but her daughter's tastes would have led her elsewhere had she been free to lead the kind of life she preferred. Every movement the young woman made was easy and natural, and every word she uttered was the simple expression of her unaffected thought. Looking at her the hostess said to herself: "I shall never succeed in walking and talking in her manner," and she admired and envied her for the aristocratic airs which the banker's daughter did not even know she possessed.

These two visitors were quickly followed by others. There was the elderly wife of a Trust magnate, whose sharp features, keen grey eyes, and remorseless social ambition filled the hostess with so much secret resentment. She had a tongue

as sharp as her features, and often let it wag as it would, regardless of consequences. The other women were more afraid of her tongue than her husband's vast wealth, yet the hostess could buy and sell them all. Then came the young and beautiful wife of a great land magnate, frivolous, gay, irresponsible, dashing, voluble. This was one of the ladies most disliked by the hostess, for she never seemed to pay her sufficient attention. This young person took nothing seriously. She did not seem surprised at the *outré* costume of the hostess, and did not remark upon it; but the elderly woman had exclaimed: "Why, you look for all the world like the sultan's favourite! Where did you find that wonderful head-dress?"

"Oh! those black pearls!" exclaimed the daughter of a millionaire senator, who had just arrived with her mother, a stately woman with a long, serious face, a long neck, and long, slender figure. What a power she would have been had her culture equalled her dignity! At least, that is what the aristocratic blonde always thought when she looked at the senator's wife.

The wife of a governor arrived, followed by a woman with grey hair, and looking ten years older than her real age. The governor's wife was fat, fair, and fifty. She lived in perpetual good-

humour, with the tap of contentment turned on from what seemed a mountain of physical strength and social prosperity, and if she had any tears in her composition she kept them well corked up for private use.

As for the visitor with grey hair, she was a small, quiet woman, the wife of a railway magnate, who did not realise why she existed. She, like her husband, possessed things, saw things, touched things, tasted things, did things, and sometimes said things, without understanding anything. She lived by the hour; never thought of the past and never reflected on the future. Once, when reading a simple novel, she tapped herself to see if she were actually alive; for the moment she had forgotten where or what she was.

On entering, the governor's wife cried out: "Just think, Lord Roehampton sails for England to-morrow on the *Lusitania*!"

"To-morrow!" exclaimed the young wife of the mining magnate. "Why, he promised to dine with us on Friday!"

The visitors soon separated into small groups. The wife of the Trust magnate was seated on a divan with the wife of the governor, and the first lady remarked: "What a whim! Where did she get the idea of that turban or whatever you

might call it? I suppose she is beginning to think we ought to cough when she sneezes."

The fat lady gave one of her chuckling laughs and said: "If she expects us to cough every time she sneezes we shall all have consumption; you know she has influenza three times a year."

"Then we 'll have to come to gripes with her," said the other.

The fat lady laughed again, this time louder and longer than before, for the face of the elder woman had that serio-comic look which always provokes hilarity, and for a moment she feared she would end in a fit of laughing hysterics.

At that very moment the banker's wife, who was seated beside the wife of the railway magnate, was discussing the political outlook as affecting the money-market and the railroads, saying: "My husband thinks we shall have a change in our form of government one of these days; he says there will be a great crash and then everyone will demand some kind of a dictator to put things to rights"; but the wife of the railway magnate smiled mechanically, and replied with her usual mechanical platitudes. It was all one to her. She had never felt maternal instinct, never experienced a feeling of patriotism, and nothing mattered. And while this talk was going on the

stately wife of the senator took a seat beside the banker's wife and the wife of the Trust magnate.

The Duc had taken his leave, and gossip was now the order of the moment.

"I believe she's given him his *congé*," said the banker's wife.

"I presume she has," said the wife of the senator. "She usually does."

"In my opinion," said the Trust magnate's wife, "she is likely to lead them all a pretty chase for a while. I have just seen Doctor X, and he inquired particularly about our hostess. You know what an expert he is in cases of neurasthenia. He says we are becoming a class of nervous subjects —"

"Not responsible for our actions," added the senator's wife, without waiting for the other to finish.

The wife of the Trust magnate simply closed her eyes and deliberately and slowly nodded her head twice, without uttering a word.

"Well," said the banker's wife, "I never felt better in my life. I always thought the men were more subject to nervous breakdowns; they have the most worry."

"Worry!" exclaimed the wife of the Trust

magnate. "There is n't a business-man in New York to-day who feels as worried as our hostess. To-day she looks like a museum freak with that impossible headgear. Where did she get the idea?"

"My husband says it's the Imperial mania," chimed in the banker's wife. "Once bitten there is no cure."

"Who was the mad dog here?" asked the senator's wife, in allusion to the hostess.

"She has had two bites, one by an English bull and another by a French poodle," replied the wife of the Trust magnate; "and of the two the poodle has the worst virus."

"And the worst of it is," said the senator's wife, "there is n't a man in America who can counteract the poison. We fly to Europe for everything. Only yesterday I was talking to my daughter about the creation of a literary salon. She asked me to give her *carte-blanche* in the matter. I have given my consent, and her father will give her a million to start with."

The senator's daughter and the daughter of the banker were now seated together in a corner, and the first said: "I don't care how soon we get an Empire; even my father thinks that culture cannot exist under a Democracy. Everything

98 THE INVINCIBLE ALLIANCE

is tainted with money. Society is becoming intolerable."

The blonde said: "Next winter I'm going to begin the formation of a salon exclusively for artists."

"And I am going to form one for poets and writers," said the other, her face lit up with a smile as serene as it was intelligent. "You know I am an only child, and my father says I shall inherit all the money I need to carry on the work I have planned. By the time I am thirty I shall be in a position to put these society women to shame."

"How splendid!" exclaimed the banker's daughter. "Let us combine our forces to render our society women even more *outré* than they are."

"We ought to make New York shine with the splendour of Florence under Lorenzo the Magnificent," said the Senator's daughter. "Father says if we women begin the glorious work in New York men will be found later on to join us, and money-making for the love of money will become absolutely unfashionable. Who knows, perhaps, if America is to remain a great Republic it will be because of art, literature, poetry, and philosophy. If the Republic can develop and foster

an aristocracy of intellect the Republic is safe. Anyway, the next five or ten years will tell the tale."

"And suppose the next ten years comes and goes like Halley's comet, without a tail, then what?"

It was the sharp, acrid voice of the Trust magnate's wife. She had approached the two young women for a moment before taking her departure. When she was gone the senator's daughter said to her companion: "What an acquisition she would be to our work if her culture were as quick as her tongue!"

"Alas, yes!" said the other, "but if she had culture she would not be in this room — that is, not at *her* age."

"And just think," went on the senator's daughter, "what a treat it will be to assist and encourage genius according to individual merit! I feel certain we are happier than our poor hostess with her impossible ambitions and her —"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the other, "she's taking her seat under the canopy she put up last year to receive the princess."

"Let's be off. She'll expect us to kiss her hand."

THE PARLIAMENTARY ARENA

IN the Parliamentary world there are but two kinds of power — the material and the intellectual. The material fascinates all who are moved by an eagle eye, a bull-dog chin, a gramophone voice, and machine-made rhetoric. There are politicians who control the people not by grasping but by gazing. They have top-knots but no beaks, gimlet eyes but no talons. Power is exerted by looks instead of deeds, symbols instead of sentiments. Others combine looks with words, the gymnastics of gesture with the shibboleths of political hygiene, and there are bulls who toss patriotism like a red flag, and gore capital without mercy.

As a rule the pervading aura emanates not from the spirit but from the carcass. Their mandates have the rumbling of the thundercloud, minus the lightning. They are the whales of the political ocean, avoiding the harpoon while bolting the gudgeon. But Mr. Arthur Balfour is like a political eel who darts and glides where the Mammals did nothing but spout and flounder.

He has been taken twice by the net, once by the tail, but never by the hook. He ignores the flounders, darts past the sharks, and skims the surface of the social sea faster than any flying-fish.

No one knows the mysterious breeding-place of the eel, and no one has ever delved into the intellectual broodings of Mr. Balfour. Light of weight, he stands forth a mere shadow thrown across the balked bodies of beery knights and bloated barons, a sore menace to the worshippers of bulk and the idolators of blood and muscle. He has none of the outward and visible signs of Mammon; no bulbous nose, no flaming cheeks, no dome, no rotundity, no beefy charlatanism, no quack-nostrum-panacea-look; he is no patent political-syringe-spray-disinfectant-medicine-man, but the proper companion of artists and aristocratic determinists, as distant from diabolian debaters as Jupiter from hot-headed Mars.

He is protean at a time when others are making vain protestations of omnipotence. He plays with the schemes of certain members in the non-chalant way a skilled dowager plays with the stakes of an unsophisticated Miss, who imagines herself in the fashionable swim when she is only having her pores and her pocket-book opened at

a hot game of bridge. Arthur Balfour is one of the few long-headed statesmen since Chatham. For he, and he alone, has applied a sort of "practical mysticism" to the beef-and-potato policy of the cooks at Westminster. He is a metaphysician who considers the earth, times the pulse of his opponents, looks at their tongues, whacks their knee-joints, meditates long enough to know the day and the hour of their locomotor-ataxy-finale. He has watched Lord Rosebery play Apollo to young dukes at banquets and Apollyon to old duchesses at the Derby; watched him attempt the rôle of Puck in the midsummer madness by trying to put a girdle round the earth with the belt of an Earl; watched him bamboozle the Lords by fine phrases and champagne rhetoric. For the real difference between Balfour and Rosebery is to be seen in the management of their public performances.

The noble Earl never keeps his eye off the social function and the social effect. Society takes first place in his scheme of razzle-dazzle. Politics come into the banquet much as a roast bird of paradise with an ostrich plume stuck in its tail. He is our only statuesque statesman. After riding into the hearts of his countrymen on the back of a thoroughbred, he poised like Mer-

cury for a brief moment on the globe of Empire, with one toe touching the ball at the top of the social staircase; both feet on the floor would have been a desecration of divinity. For at one time Lord Rosebery was a transcendental democrat, who beat the religious air with mercurial wings, deftly sounding the harp of Nonconformity with vague æolian numbers without once playing a tune anyone could remember. In these days he comes forth at the hour of political hunger, like old Mother Hubbard, pointing a lean finger at the remnants left by Scotch terriers, Irish bulls, and English half-breeds, for something has happened during his absence — the artful Arthur has found the bones and picked them bare. For he, and not Rosebery, is the watchdog of castle and close; he it is who makes the silent rounds while the others are snoring under their parti-coloured quilts, he it is who sniffs the proletarian pole-cats from afar, catches the sound of foot-pads beyond the garden gate, who knows the difference between a brindled cat and a black nondescript in a London fog. Our only Arthur is not playing a game of aristocratic seclusion.

Lord Rosebery times his speech-making to the psychological social moment, but Mr. Balfour is on hand, equipped like a doctor with a large prac-

tice and small medicine case full of specifics for all forms of national malaria, parochial quinsy, religious tic-doloureux, paradoxical neurasthenia, and Imperial hysterics. Besides this, he is a musician of parts as well as of parties; he knows all the Celtic tunes, with the English airs thrown in, and that is saying more than one could say of Lord Rosebery, who dare not venture further than "Rule Britannia" or "Polly put the kettle on." No need for Arthur Balfour to harp on one string; England is his organ, Scotland his bagpipes, Parliament his fiddle; he is gravedigger in the House of Commons (as the noble Earl is Hamlet in the House of Lords), and plays a lament at every fresh burial of the other Party. Without Mr. Balfour the Commons would fall below concert pitch, excepting when the Irish have the floor or when the Labour leaders are rehearsing for the millennium under the baton of Mr. Keir Hardie.

Mr. Balfour can smile with dignity and be sociable with sang-froid. Give a statesman the reputation of a fashionable clubman and he becomes like Ceylon tea that has been drawn once. Chronic after-dinner speech-making is a dangerous indulgence. There is no occasion where disillusionment can come with a stroke so sudden. A man who does it once with the felicity that

unites a godlike grip with the golden mean of wit and humour has run the gauntlet of bayonets in a pitched battle, escaped the bullets, and missed the bombs. He may well apply for a medal, not for having lost a limb, but for having emerged from so deadly an affair without a scratch. Before he begins to speak the toast-responder has to recruit and skirmish for facts, then marshal his words and drill his sentences. In the middle of the speech the rhetorical manœuvres begin, and here, on the Champ de Mars of his own imagination, he assaults the passions of the feasters, storms their emotions, scales the Spion Kop of their patriotism, and takes his seat on the summit. Four things go to the making of such an accomplishment — art, intuition, opportunity, and power. Since Disraeli, no statesman in the British Parliament has been in possession of such a gift. To be master of such an art a statesman cannot appear to order at all times and seasons and pass for a recluse in a castle whose walls defy the maddest Romeos in search of the most illusive Juliets.

Mr. Joseph Chamberlain is the only one who could eat, drink, and make merry in the midst of City Fathers and bloated Aldermen, and remain the gimlet-boring, screw-driving Joe Cham-

berlain of old. He could rise at a dinner and quaff a glass of port to the health of the portly barons, and be paradoxical in wishing them a better mien on a still more gouty diet. He could revise their tariff, subdivide their lands, supervise their food, subsidise the Navy, and patronise the Lords. If Mr. Balfour is the eel among politicians, Joseph Chamberlain is the ferret in the rabbit warren of the long-eared financiers. He does not hunt like the fox and hide with the hare. He does no hunting, yet his pack are hounding the moss-backs out of their lairs and out of their wits. He follows no man's horn but that of his own proboscis, asks for nothing but the power to stand up in Parliament and by a flash of those steely eyes make them sing a new song:

"Of gout where is thy sting!
Oh Joe where is thy victory!"

Mr. Lloyd George is cock of the walk in little Wales, but on the big cock-walk of the Terrace of the House the bipeds with goose quills preen their feathers to Imperial flights while hatching dragons.

Parliament now contains a plethora of parties of a nondescript order who suggest strong mustard in a sham-sandwich, watercress on a stream filled

with Scotch salmon and Tipperary trout, or a dash of lemon juice in a cosmopolitan toddy.

What they need is another edition of Tim Healy. At the beautiful Parliamentary banquets he is pepper, salt, vinegar, champagne, and the carving-knife. His slices are thin, but no one asks for a second helping. Our only Tim holds some members in their seats by a mere glance, and for a very good reason. His words are prussic-acid applied to political guilt. They burn through to the brass bottom. The vitriol hisses and the House becomes like a place undergoing disinfection; dead men have been carried out stricken by a microbe which is not down in the medical books. He makes people laugh; but there are people who would laugh even in a room given over to vivisection. Everything goes on the floor of the House, that dear old floor, whose cracks are wide enough to let the fumes of Hades rise and choke many an honourable and virtuous member with the vapours of envy, jealousy, and social rivalry. Evidently the House exists for three purposes: as a figure-head of aristocracy, as a figure-head of commerce, and as a figure-head of democracy.

Just at present Mr. Balfour stands for the first, Mr. Lloyd George for the second, Mr. Keir Hardie

for the third. The Irish are there, and will remain there; they are there to wake the dead, determined to give each corpse a decent burial; they constitute a fourth estate. But there is a fifth estate, formed by the moths whose wings have been scorched by those fatal candles at St. Stephens, that burn at both ends, one tallow, that smokes in the Lower House, the servants' hall, the other wax, that burns serenely in the Upper House, the gentlemen's club — the place where pipe-clay becomes marble, where every good politician would like to go when he shuffles off the mortal coil of non-conforming, demagoguing, two-a-penny existence. But what a crowd of moths are attracted by the glare of the tallow dip! Rosebery himself, not content with the halo of the aurora borealis of the House of the silver spoons, flits about the candles of the Lower House.

There is but one party that can afford the luxury of doing what they please; that party counts among its members Mr. Keir Hardie. They can wear dickies, play skittles with modes and manners, thump tables, and call names. The only way to succeed in Parliament to-day is to begin by being rude. To win the respect of the "hupper succles," take them on the level of the

mood you happen to be in. Tell them you have no objection when the social upheaval comes for them to cultivate a cabbage patch à la Wiggs at Government expense. This will take their breath away, and the social whales will not attempt to swallow the prophetic Jonah. A politician may change his policy, but pure politics means get on and keep on! Nevertheless, as Emerson said: "An aristocrat is one who is doing his best to become a democrat."

The philosophical democrat is the true blue aristocrat. That is why there is an Upper House. But the Upper House is top heavy with men who cannot tell the difference between a tallow dip and a wax candle. It has long been the dumping-ground for the decrepit who were once intrepid, for shambling figure-heads minus the culture of the real aristocrat and lacking the ordinary business capacity of a successful grocer. The majority are porous-plasters on the national body, leeches on the old war-horse of glorious memories. We may now expect a series of the most astounding games ever played on a Parliamentary chess-board.

THE SOUL'S NEW REFUGE

IF Walter Pater had said music will soon take precedence of all the other arts, he would have been as much in the right as when he said: "All art aspires towards music."

Sentiment and emotion must have an outlet. Modes of expression shift from one art to another. And if it is true that realism has taken the place of romance in the novel, if it is true that the cynical has banished the ideal from literature, if the commonplace has taken the place of beauty in art, music restores all that the other arts have lost. It is the only art untrammelled by sects, opinions, parties, and geographical limits, with an adequate expression for all the varying moods of humanity and the most subtle intimations of a world lying beyond that of reason and will.

Individualism and contradiction have driven the soul to seek a refuge in the overworld of harmonic vibrations. In England, puritanism put a ban on music, and the people were driven to poetry for a psychic appeal to the higher states of consciousness. Milton was a musician who expressed his emotions in verse, and was the first

to fill the void; but not till the death of Tennyson did poetry in England begin to give way to musical inspiration.

Shelley was a lyrical metaphysician, Browning tried to wed philosophy to rhyme, Wordsworth did his utmost to bring the divinity in Nature to the comprehension of the people, but all the English poets of the past hundred years were agitated by a spirit of transition. They represented not so much a state of the soul as a spirit of agitation and discontent. They were always reaching out for something just above attainment. Swinburne came the nearest to wedding words to music, and his poetry might have been as psychic as it was musical had he not, in the beginning, steeped his mind in the transient commonplaces of political and transitory passions. He revelled in combinations of rhyme as Richard Wagner often revelled in combinations of chords behind which there was no meaning. Swinburne reached the borderland where words cease and music begins, and it is a significant fact that just as he finished his career, music established her dominion not only in England but in all the English-speaking countries.

It required four centuries of English poetry to prepare the Anglo-Saxon ear for a return of the

art that dominated all the arts of the Greeks, and nearly three thousand years for the Orphean vibration to encircle the Western worlds. With the Greeks, music was the basis of all great thought and all artistic inspiration. With them certain modes of music had an esoteric meaning, a positive bearing on creative thought, a power to awaken dormant faculties and engender ideas. With the materialistic Romans, under the Cæsars, music lost its psychic power; but with the advent of Palestrina it became a means of religious exaltation. Palestrina made it a method of praise instead of a channel of inspiration as with the Greeks. Later, the Italian opera became a vehicle for the display of dramatic passion and trivial humour, a form of amusement for the passing hour, with little suggestion of the mystical or the esoteric. With the symphony began that combination of melody, form, and rhythm which was to lead the way to a return of the tonal symbols and esoteric meanings of the ancients.

Wagner, whose genius was dominated by movement and agitation, frequently achieved the sublime without attaining the desired esoteric serenity, but Debussy succeeded in attaining by modern orchestral means a much nearer approach to the subtle suggestiveness of the Greeks at the

time of Pythagoras. Since Debussy began his work orchestral music has become more absolute, more transcendent, forcing technique and counterpoint to take an inferior place.

The first popular expression of music in England was shown in the works of Gilbert and Sullivan. Previous to their advent musical art in this country was intended for musicians. Concerts and operas were patronised by a restricted class, and the number seemed never to increase. But now the public began to awaken to the possibilities of the rhythmic in comedy and in drama. The music-halls gradually became more musical than farcical, the lyric-dramas of Wagner began to free the public ear from the bondage of the puritanical mode, and musical comedy and burlesque began to detract from ordinary plays and dramas. The melodrama, like the operetta, was an importation from Paris, and still newer musical forms have come from there and from Germany, for music is now the one cosmopolitan, universal art whose power is recognised in every land. It is now much more international than literature. And the reason is simple enough — opinions in books clash with other opinions, and one country may fail to become interested in the sentiments and doings of another country; but

music ignores opinions and deals directly with feeling and emotion. It is for the senses, while books are mainly for the intellect, and the intellect is always at war with the intellectual.

"One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin," says an old saw, and it is just as true that one touch of music puts all the world in tune. It is the quintessential magic whose potency is now felt by all the peoples of the earth, from the most intellectual to the most illiterate.

With but few exceptions, in former times, composers could not reason profoundly. The marvellous Mozart seemed all nerves, and Chopin was incapable of profound reasoning about anything; but his contemporary, Berlioz, was a writer of real talent and militant convictions. Beethoven was the profoundest thinker of them all.

And now once more in the history of civilisation the signs point to a union of music, literature, and philosophy, with music as the key to all. If such a union is consummated it will metamorphose the world of art, literature, and psychology. One thing may be taken for granted — music, in our day, has become for many thousands of people a refuge against the onslaughts and delusions of materialism, and just in proportion as

opinions become more positive, music will become more imperative. Society having become chaotic, people will be more and more attracted to the harmony created by rhythmic sounds. But more than all else, music is becoming a psychic necessity.

There never was a time when so many leading thinkers, artists, and writers were practical musicians.

In France, Auber was the first to express a national musical taste; he was the forerunner of Offenbach, who brought music to the comprehension of the wits and writers of the boulevard, forming a bridge between the Italian opera and musical burlesque. In the operetta, he embodied the sentiment and *esprit* of the typical boulevardier. He sentimentalised Parisian cynicism. He was the first musical genius whose work was acclaimed within the space of a single decade in Berlin and St. Petersburg, in Vienna and Rome, in London and New York. Offenbach began to compose in 1858, and he was famous long before Arthur Sullivan achieved celebrity. He revolutionised the musical world as much in his own sphere as Wagner did in his, and, between the two, music began to take a firm hold in places where it had little, if any, influence before. While

Wagner was regarding the world from Parsifalian heights, Offenbach was raising wit and gaiety to a higher level, appeasing the sentimental cynics of a *blasé* empire, inspiring writers and artists with suave melodies that often attained the serene dignity of Meyerbeer or the most passionate outbursts of Rossini.

Logic is the enemy of musical originality, and the French mind, being the most logical in Europe, at first refused Wagner, who was a musical Goth, and, for a time, resisted Offenbach, who was a musical Visigoth, for both were Germans. But music defies logic and ignores reason. It did in France what literature could not do, and the more people boasted of their Voltairian scepticism the greater the attraction they felt for the new musical modes of expression.

Rousseau was the first modern writer to defy French logic and begin to talk about Nature as a poet-musician would talk about flowers, bees, and birds. He was the first modern to attain a universal psychic rhythm by words. He was the first to make literature musical. This was his secret. Voltaire, devoid of the musical sense, remains but a catchword for people whose souls are like dried parchments for the shibboleths of negation, while the rhythmic vibrations set in

motion by Rousseau still continue. He did what French poetry failed to do because of the bondage placed upon it by logical form and the restrictions of Latin art. He turned on the faucets of inspiration, and let the musical waves descend from a mountain of emotional rhythm which inundated two continents, fertilising the intellectual deserts of the Gaul, the Teuton, the Slav, the Anglo-Saxon, and the Anglo-American.

The vibrations of wit and humour are not continuous. This is why people reason about Voltaire as they reason about shoe-leather. He was a figure-head, Rousseau a fountain-head. Cynicism has never conquered sentiment. But sentiment had to be embodied in the musical mode; yet Rousseau was not a sentimental automaton; he was a born artist who turned to Nature and the simple life for deliverance from the Parisian plague of sceptical logic and witty sophistry, a writer who wielded a power that defied all the schools of classical art and every system of Latin philosophy. Behind all, deep in the recesses of his nature, there resided the quintessential harmony of form and number, the secret of all literary magic. It was not what he taught that influenced the world, but the way he taught; not the matter, but the manner. Had anyone else taught some-

thing different with the same verbal power, the results would have been the same. Others before him had said much the same things, but the writers were not endowed with the harmonic mysteries of speech.

Rousseau spread over the world a psychic aura fashioned in the mould of harmonic law. In his symphonic sentences his baton was not wielded by reason but by emotion. Millet and Manet did much the same for art a hundred years later, proving once again that form without psychic vitality is void of power. Form must embody feeling before it can act on the feelings of others, and all great art is the result of combined comprehension and feeling. The greatest are those who can both see and transcribe.

"Francis Bacon," says Mr. Arthur Balfour, "was a prophet and a seer; he is never tired of telling us that the kingdom of Nature, like the kingdom of God, can only be entered by those who approach it in the spirit of the child."

Bacon, like a great artist-seer, "created the atmosphere in which scientific discovery flourishes." But it required upwards of two centuries for his prophecies to begin to be realised, while Rousseau lived to see marvellous results follow the appearance of his works. Bacon had to fight a

wilful and blind science, but Rousseau had to battle with the prevailing logic and the Voltairian gossips of the salons, and these were often as formidable as an army of well-drilled apes armed with rapiers. Wit was too blunt and common a weapon to be of any use here, and argument alone was futile. Everybody could argue. The call was for a magician who could operate by revulsion. The fashionable mania had to be stilled by a new Orpheus who could sing while he operated, whose divine art swamped gossip, drowned persiflage, and led people captive towards the green fields of a new Eden.

Rousseau was in no sense a humorist. Neither was Chateaubriand, who succeeded him, nor Hugo, who succeeded Chateaubriand. Tolstoy was influenced more by Rousseau's politics than he was by the deeper meanings of his art. The Russian realist could not grasp the harmonic significance of Rousseau the poet, and perhaps it was the lack of humour in Tolstoy that made him respond to the fanatical and visionary elements of the *Social Contract* and the insanity of the *Confessions*, for Tolstoy was a Russian Jean Jacques without his Orphic charm.

And this leads me to remember that Russian prose has always lacked the rhythmic element.

Russian writers have possessed dramatic and psychological power, but the want of the rhythmic quality in the novelists of that country is now driving the Russian public from literature to music, the last refuge from realistic negation.

IMPRESSIONS OF ITALY

THE bane of the modern travelling world is to be found in the tendency to see people, climate, countries, and art through someone's tinted spectacles, and, above all, by the aid of someone's guide-book. Italy has suffered more than any other country from the guide-book pest. Few sightseers are able to give you a vivid personal impression of people and things in that country. Even learned travellers, before coming to Italy, think the proper thing to do is to steep their minds in books about this or that art, this or that city, until they are so full of the opinions and sensations of others that they have no place for personal feeling or personal opinion. It would be instructive to find out how many Anglo-Americans have steeped their brains in Ruskin before coming to Italy, how many Germans have been hypnotised by Goethe's impressions, how many novel readers have made themselves drunk on Madame de Staël's *Corinne* before seeing this country.

The only people who escape this blunder are the French. It is all but impossible to fool a

Frenchman in this way; he persists in being influenced by his own impressions. He makes use of a guide-book only for the routine details. Another fatal drawback is to come to Florence expecting to see the Florence of Dante. There is about as much relation between Dante's age and the present as there is between Shakespeare's age and the age of Dickens. The fact that Italians dress like other people and in the modern fashions ought to be sufficient to bring people to their senses in this matter.

What concerns me when I walk in the Lung Arno is what the living people look like, what they are doing, and what they think. Foreign visitors rarely see a thing as a whole. Their impressions are just as often wrong as right, and some of the supposed authorities are positively colour-blind. There are writers on Italy who are unable to distinguish the difference in shades of trees, hills, sky, and atmosphere. The actual colour of the olive tree, seen at a little distance, is not green but a neutral grey; seen close at hand it becomes a grey-green. The cypress at a little distance is what artists call a *terre-verte*, and under a cloudy sky a cypress grove becomes much nearer being black than any shade I ever saw in the Black Forest of Baden.

There is what one might call a fixed orthodox superstition about Italy. The superstition is imbibed not in Italy, but long before people come here. This perversion teaches the horde of visitors to smile or weep at the wrong things and in the wrong places. Ruskin's exaggerations have had, and are still having, much to do with this far-fetched sentimentality. Ruskin, in about eighty per cent of cases, is admired not for his real beauty as a writer, not for his rare æsthetic penetration, but for his errors of judgment.

As for the lesser writers, most of them spoil a good thing by trying too hard to depict what is perhaps beyond anyone's powers to depict adequately in words. Italy is at once illusive and real, and to describe things as they are writers should be artists and poets, with a strong sense of the real. Italy is too clearly wrought, too positive, too realistic, to be treated metaphysically. Abstruse ethical criticism renders the subject still more illusive. The Italians come to the reality through the medium of poetry, music, and literature; they have never been much influenced by the abstract methods of the cold North nor even by the cold logic of the French, and the present renaissance is appealing to the scientific and philosophical mode of thought in

a manner which is quite new to Italy. But while the Italians are becoming more scientific they remain at heart poets and musicians, because the Italian temperament cannot, even if it would, get rid of poetry and music.

To be in Italy again after an absence of nearly twenty years has ushered me through a series of sensations as fresh and new as any I ever experienced.

It is now many years since I received my first impressions of Italian art, not from brick, or marble, or anything plastic, but from the living embodiment of the highest expression of dramatic genius of that time, the incomparable Ristori, whom I saw in her greatest rôles — as Medea, as Mary Stuart, as Queen Elizabeth, as Lady Macbeth, and, above all, in her haunting impersonation of Lucrezia Borgia, the only dramatic creation which in my mind is always linked with Michelangelo's "Pieta" in marble. Most tragedies are inhuman. In *Lucrezia Borgia*, Ristori attained the summit of tragedy and touched the depths of maternal tenderness. Her two supremest moments arrived when, as Lady Macbeth, she heard the announcement of the murder of Duncan and cried out: "What! In my house?" and as Lucrezia Borgia when on her knees she im-

plored Gennaro to save himself by swallowing the antidote to the poison she had given him. I saw the crowd leaving the theatre transformed, hushed into silence by the passion, the power, and the magic of the reality.

After Ristori the next great dramatic event in my experience was with Salvini, certainly the greatest tragedian of modern times. After seeing him as Othello one could not endure anyone else in the same rôle. His Macbeth, also, was a thrilling performance; but by far the most impressive and realistic impersonation of Macbeth I ever witnessed — and I have seen all the most noted actors in that rôle during the past fifty years — was an English actor whose name I have forgotten, who played the part when I was in Melbourne in 1878. The acting of this man, an artist of the old school, was the human flesh and blood Macbeth, passing on through all the grades of ambition, hesitancy, fear, harassed by hallucinations, driven from horror to terror, and from terror to the last stages of desperation, standing in the final scene like a stag at bay, the beads of sweat rolling down his haggard face, terrible and desperate to the last.

In the late 'sixties I heard Italian opera for the first time. There were the tenors Brignoli

and Fancelli, and later Campanini, who took London by storm in the early 'seventies, but Fancelli was divine. Between the tenors of those days and the tenors of the present a great gulf is fixed. With the advent of the husky, blatant German school of singing musical art has all but vanished. When the Italian school held the boards a false note, a husky voice were things unknown in opera.

I once heard Titiens sing the rôle of Lucrezia Borgia at Covent Garden in a fog, with the stage lighted by torches, and even then the singer was not more than half visible. A shadow was seen walking about the stage, emitting sounds.

Patti and Scalchi in *Semiramide*, at a time when their voices were still fresh and without a flaw, was an event not to be forgotten.

I think I have witnessed *Lucrezia Borgia*, both as drama and opera, at least a hundred times in different parts of the world. In former days Italian opera was usually accompanied by a ballet. There was Bonfanti, who was almost too fat to dance, and could do little more than walk gracefully through her part; there was the sylph-like Morlacchi, white, thin, and pure as a lily, who turned the stage into a kind of temple while she was dancing; and the wonderful San-

galli, a terpsichorean Cleopatra, whose very walk had in it something majestic. All these, and scores of others, were from La Scala, the one institution that gave the world its dominant tone in operatic art, and without which the art-world would be still more barbarous than it is.

I had for the moment forgotten Duse, an Italian of the Italians. Ristori was a tragedienne who acted as a woman, Duse is a woman who enacts tragedy. Rachel achieved greatness by her beautiful voice and an extraordinary perception of the artifices of dramatic art. Ristori and Duse became great because of an innate sense of an art that was natural and could afford to dispense with artifice. Now, in French dramatic art one can never forget that the actor is acting. The school of declamation and gesture is always before us. We know what is going to happen for the reason that we know what ought to happen. Genius is the only thing that can afford the luxury of naturalness. Duse did the very thing no playgoer expected her to do. And so did Salvini. He surprised his audiences by his unique attitudes, his startling gestures and passionate outbursts. Scratch a Russian and you will find a Tartar and a mystic; scratch a Frenchman and you will find a critic and a logician; scratch an

Italian and you will find an artist and an actor.

Never did I realise the full force of Italian expression until I witnessed a performance of Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* in Rome some twenty years ago, with Gemma Bellincioni in the leading rôle. Previous to that experience I considered *Lohengrin* the final attainment of expression in the realm of opera. In the second act of *Lohengrin* the chorus wafts one out of the actual into spaces never attained before, but how vague and mystical is the feeling evoked! It is a metaphysical triumph in music — an apotheosis of hope deferred, desire rendered futile, passion extenuated, vanity stripped of illusion, a spiral symphony of sounds gradually mounting towards the summit of disillusionment, and the higher it mounts the further it recedes from human sentiment and human passion. In the great chorus of *La Gioconda* what we hear in the music is not a process of disillusionment but dissolution itself. Here we are not listening to musical metaphysics but something human, far beyond the power of words to express. Wagner manipulates the nerves and the imagination, Ponchielli appeals to reality. By a tremendous mass of concentrated melody, in which there is nothing tortuous or

spiral, he lets a great wave of emotion descend like an avalanche from a vast height, and in the midst of amazement and horror the voice of pity rises superhumanly serene as from an abyss of tragedy. Here and there in Æschylus, in Euripides, in Virgil and Dante, in Shakespeare, in the opening lines of Shelley's *Queen Mab*, and in Goethe's *Faust* such moments are achieved.

What, then, is the secret of Italian expression? Italian art has never left the real to grapple with the illusive. German romanticism was a search after the romance of the impossible. The same may be said of the romantic period of France. While Northern peoples were groping about for unknown and untried ideals, Italy remained herself. Every intelligent Italian is well endowed with the critical faculty. The cultured Italian possesses taste, the quality which, according to Haydn, gave Mozart his impeccable charm. Italian music may have dull and monotonous moments, but nowhere, even in the old Italian operas, is there anything to match Wagner at his worst.

A Frenchman achieves taste through a sense of reason. There is something mathematical in French art. In Italy taste is an instinct. An Italian does not begin to criticise until he begins

to create. Metaphysics and sentimentality are inimical to taste, and German philosophy, like German art and music, has represented with but few exceptions what one might call a condition of metaphysical incoherence. What, it may be asked, was the cause of German romanticism? It originated from a want of social, philosophical, and æsthetic repose. Goethe was suffering from severe sentimental agitation when he wrote *Werther*. Germany first, and then France, suffered not from the romance of art and poetry but from the romance of neurasthenia. It was not a sane and vital power but a disease. Goethe was cured of it later, but Victor Hugo was never wholly free. In the meantime, Italy began to be agitated politically, while remaining patient, and even serene.

The smile of the Italian is a perpetual peace-offering for the repose of his own soul. I have already discovered in this smile, at certain times, a strange mingling of cynicism and pity, a mingling of superhuman patience with a sense of the inevitable, a sense of inherent beauty struggling to maintain a fitting and harmonious exterior. It is sometimes the union of Macchiavellian wisdom, Dantesque feeling, and whole tomes of other things never expressed in poems, novels, or

dramas. Nothing but the most complex music could translate the Italian smile into audible expression. Perhaps it would be better to say that it does duty at the moment where language ceases and music is suggested. Compared with it domes, dramas, operas, and architecture take a second place, for these things are the products of the national smile, which, I am convinced, is as old as Cæsar, and must have lit the face of Virgil and Mæcenas at the banquets of Augustus.

MATERIALISM AND CRIME

WILL materialism bring our civilisation to an end, or will crime and insanity compel our civilisation to get rid of materialism? The time has come not only to put these questions, but have them answered. They are questions, not only for philosophers and politicians, but for the people who call themselves "progressive" thinkers, agnostic scientists without a fixed belief, and that numerous body of empirical "researchers" who dabble in various quasi-scientific experiments supposed to assist the mere believer to form a more positive and comforting conception of a state of the soul after death.

Scepticism, when it endures beyond two generations, ends in materialism.

The Greeks and the Romans became decadent through scepticism; they ended in national disruption because there was no faith left on which to build anything, and crime kept pace with progressive decadence until there was no place left for genius and philosophy, and the arena of politics became a public slaughter-house for

murderers and criminals of every description. Jerusalem, Athens, and Rome ended in materialism; then came the new faith. Christianity brought with it a new civilisation, a new art, and a new literature. It did not bring a new philosophy; but it has ended by introducing, familiarising, and imposing a new science.

We are now at the point when, leaving out many other considerations, we have to ask: Will nations be compelled to suppress materialism as they are suppressing consumption, or will the nations end in an orgy of crime?

In former times men feared a God, and when they ceased to fear they still feared death. Shakespeare makes Hamlet soliloquise about the after-life, and he frankly admits that were he assured that death ends all he would put an end to his life with a "bare bodkin."

No one can doubt the affinity existing between murder and suicide, both being in many cases the result of mingled scepticism and materialism.

Germany is the hot-bed of modern materialism, and in no other country are there so many suicides. Haeckel attempts to explain away the universe from a scientific point of view, without leaving a gleam of psychic enlightenment.

There are times when I consider France the

mother of modern materialism. My long acquaintance with French philosophy, with French wit, and the cynicism of the boulevards, gives me authority to speak. The difference between German and French scepticism is the difference between science and art. The Germans have attacked spiritual things by the use of the smelting pot, the French by logic. The Teuton hits with bars of pig-iron, the Gaul with rapiers of steel. It requires a long and intimate acquaintance with the typical wit of Berlin and Paris to penetrate to the depths of their shiftless nescience. But the danger of French materialists lies not so much in their method as in their manner. Voltaire fooled the people by the diamond flash of his wit; German sceptics fool the people by their ponderosity. German science is the pugilism of the intellect, French materialism is the neurosis of the spirit.

On the other hand, materialism in England is the product of three centuries of unobstructed political and commercial expansion; it has developed out of a drowsy and stall-fed optimism, imitating, by a singular stroke of destiny, the lethargy which existed in Rome just before the inrush of northern hordes. Materialism in America is largely borrowed from Germany because it

looks scientific, from France because it smacks of wit, and from England because it is fashionable.

Our civilisation is not face to face with a question of religious form, but a question of far greater importance. We have to face the fact that the church a man belongs to counts for nothing now; his creed matters nothing, one way or the other. What does matter is the private belief of the people. The question used to be: Do you belong to some religious sect? Business men used to put that question to young men seeking employment. It is too late now to look for success in any such vain manœuvring, since it has been amply proved that professing or not professing religion makes no real difference in the general conduct of the thing called business. The outward and visible form has ceased to count for anything; the one vital point to be considered is the secret conviction of the individual; what do all the millions think who jostle each other in the street every day — the soldiers, the sailors, the clerks, the stockbrokers, the lawyers, the judges who preside at great trials, the bishops and fashionable clergymen, the professional politicians, the lords and the ladies who set the fashions and who hang on the skirts of the court: what do all these people actually think about

death and the after-life? Have they or have they not got a conscience? Do they stand in legitimate fear of anybody or anything? If not, all alike are dangerous. An agnostic bishop is as dangerous to a community as a traitor in a high social position, and far worse than a common murderer.

A man who does not believe he has a soul is a man who does not believe I have a soul, and there is nothing to stop him but fear of the law. So long as he escapes the law he cares for no one. Why should he fear conscience if death is the end of consciousness? Christian civilisation has been descending lower and lower for a period of four centuries. It used to occupy the roof of a sort of tower of Babel which looked towards the stars. There was air, space, vision. Civilisation and barbarism are now separated by a few laws, a few conventions, one or two ideals, and a single religion. To-day nothing but a hatch separates us from primitive barbarism. Underneath is the lair of the wild beast, whose growls are as audible and menacing as were those of the old Roman arena when Rome thirsted for human blood.

It must be evident to anyone who gives the subject a moment's serious thought that no sane man who is a believer in the immortality of the

soul would commit a murder in cold blood. Nor would anyone who believes in a return of the dead ever think of murdering anyone. Nor is the question confined to murder: all the greater crimes are influenced more or less by a man's secret beliefs. There never was a time when so many officers in Germany and France have tried to sell their country for "a mess of pottage"; it is the spirit of materialism, which urges such people on to reap what pleasures they may before death arrives.

We may be at the beginning of a reign of a state of affairs the like of which the world has never known, a state of things which may cause a pandemonium of unrelenting fury in which all the so-called Christian nations, become materialistic at heart, after playing at hypocrisy so long, will throw off their masks and engage in an Armageddon of slaughter in which the thing called humanity will have no part, in which the total destruction of commercial rivals will be the only incentive and the only aim. And the soldiers most likely to win in the final rounding up are the Russians in Europe, the Turks in the Near East, and the yellow races in the Far East. Because these people still believe they have souls. They are not afraid to die. The materialist hates

to die, although he may not fear death. His desire is to live as long as he can and enjoy all he can.

And not only this, but there is likely to come a time, and that before very long, when the soldiers of the sceptical nations will refuse to fight; the feeling of patriotism will evaporate. When this happens they will feel as if one ruler is as good as another — a Czar of Russia would prove as welcome as a King of England or an Emperor of Germany.

While the Continental nations like Germany and France have been made materialistic by science, England and America have been made so by a sentimental form of religion, with science and commercialism as props. We are an emotional people with sentimental whims, seldom able to give a sound reason for believing in anything, because sentimentalism and sound sense do not dwell together. This being so, there is a rude awakening in store for the Anglo-Saxon sentimentalist. In the hour of inexorable crime and universal upheaval all the sentimentalisms of the present would go as chaff in a whirlwind. The sentimental materialists, without real faith in anything or anybody, would fail to render the people any real courage or consolation.

That our civilisation is becoming more and more materialistic is proved by the astounding number of child suicides which occur year after year. Two or three decades ago child suicides were rarely known. This state of things is the result of the first harvest of our materialistic sowing, and a curious phase of the union of materialism and sentimentality is the hatred of authority which the combination so often produces. Children left to their own whims and devices turn out unrelenting free-will sentimentalists. The wonder is that more suicides do not occur, and if blood-crimes do not increase under our present mode of civilisation it will be still more wonderful. One characteristic of murder is its frequent concurrence with suicide. Whole families often disappear instead of a single member, and double suicides are too frequent to cause any unusual comment. We are growing used to horrors. And what is still more curious, from lack of real ordeals produced by prolonged wars, people gloat over sordid crimes and vulgar criminals as they never did in former days. A murder mystery gives profound satisfaction. The most stimulating and melodramatic murders now occur in England and America, the two most "religious" and sentimental countries in the world;

also the two nations where the dollar is most worshipped.

The void left by the passing of heroic emotions is filled by the horrible, the monstrous, and the sadic. Geneva, the greatest stronghold of sectarian religion in the world, is now to become an arena for the Spanish bull-fight. And yet sentimentalists tell us that the passing of war means the arrival of the millennium. From having been heroic we have grown pusillanimous, superstitious, and cruel. We seek horrors instead of heroes.

Another astonishing thing in this so-called scientific age is the prevalence of superstition. With all our science we were never so steeped in the slough of superstitious isms. We pretend to be agnostics and sceptics, while a cheap irony covers great chasms of fear, apprehension, and dread. Irony may fool a good many people in the beginning, but nothing so soon wears out. It is the one thing which is powerless to produce anything. It became fashionable at the break-up of the Victorian era, when the old Pickwickian humour had run its course and the creative faculty was as good as dead. When we become impoverished in pocket we buy the cheapest stuffs, when we become impoverished in mind we use the cheapest phrases, when we become bank-

rupt in morals we hide the nudity of our souls in ironic platitudes.

Irony is the bluntest arrow in the quiver of our ineffectual lucifers, who might rise to a terrestrial heaven if their wings, like their weapons, were not made of goose quills. Underneath all the persiflage is the haunting fear of final collapse, for with the vanishing of the religious spirit there seems to be no place left for a sense of the higher mystical forces of the universe. There is but one thing that can lift people and nations above the sordid and the sensational, and that is a high order of mystical optimism which shall take the place of materialistic religion and materialistic science.

A great revival of art, poetry, and literature will not be possible until a new religious spirit pervades the world.

HAMPTON COURT AND VERSAILLES

THE history of Hampton Court is that of a thousand dreams and a thousand illusions. In Henry VIII's time it had a thousand rooms and a thousand bay-windows, and Henry had a retinue of a thousand persons.

Cardinal Wolsey built Hampton Court, but Henry made it famous; and more of the business of state was transacted there than in any other place during his reign.

With Wolsey began the pomp and magnificence. The great Cardinal's ambition was to make Hampton Court a unique place of entertainment and festivity; and this he accomplished by "feasting all ambassadors of foreign potentates," says Cavendish, a gentleman of Wolsey's household. Indeed, it was even then considered a royal dwelling, for the Cardinal's creation was always resorted to as "a king's house with noblemen and gentlemen, with coming and going in and out, feasting and banqueting these ambassadors divers times and all others right nobly."

Several times a year Henry VIII repaired to

the Cardinal's house, and on each occasion "there wanted no preparations or goodly furniture, with viands of the finest sort that could be gotten for money or friendship." Imagination was set to work to invent new pleasures; suppers, masques, and mummeries were devised in so gorgeous and costly a manner that nothing equal to the magnificence was ever seen in Europe. The fairest ladies of the realm were invited to dance with the maskers, and the music provided must have been wonderfully original and effective.

It was not enough that the King was often entertained in this way; an impulse would seize him to go to Hampton Court, and he would arrive by water, secretly, without the slightest noise, masked, and accompanied by a crowd of maskers, dressed like shepherds, with garments of fine cloth of gold and crimson satin "paned," and with beards of fine gold or silver wire. With these came torch-bearers and drummers. When they had landed guns were fired off and the noblemen and officers of the Palace roused Wolsey, who, pretending ignorance of the King's arrival, desired the Lord Chamberlain to see what was the cause of the commotion; on looking out of the windows near the river-bank, the crowd in masks was discovered approaching. The Cardi-

nal, pretending to take them for ambassadors from some foreign prince, gave orders for them to be received in the hall, afterwards to be conducted to the banqueting-room. When all the maskers had come in the King pulled down his visor and disclosed his presence to the joy of all the company. Wolsey invited the King to take the "place of estate," which he did after exchanging his dress for rich and princely garments.

In the meantime the table was spread again with new and perfumed cloths, when a fresh banquet of "two hundred divers dishes of wondrous devices and subtleties" was served.

The greatest occasion of all during the days of Wolsey was the splendid reception of the embassy of eighty French noblemen headed by Du Bellay and Anne de Montmorency. For this reception and feast scores of caterers and purveyors were sent out to bring in all the expert cooks and culinary artists they could find in London or elsewhere to concoct new and fantastic dishes.

The cooks worked day and night to provide a feast such as had never been seen, "where lacked neither gold, silver, nor any costly thing meet for the purpose." Hundreds of yeomen and grooms were kept busy fitting the different cham-

bers and halls with costly hangings and beds of silk. For weeks Hampton Court was invaded by an army of carpenters, masons, painters, and artificers of every description. Two hundred and eighty extra beds were provided for the foreign visitors, and such a carrying of gold and silver plate to and fro, such a tramping up and down, in and out, was never seen, even in a king's palace.

When the memorable day came the French embassy arrived long before the hour of their appointment, but Wolsey's wit was equal to the occasion; he caused them to ride to Hanworth, a royal park three miles away, there to hunt until evening, when they returned to Hampton Court, and each guest was shown to a separate chamber "having a great fire and wine for their comfort and relief, remaining there till the great banquet was ready."

The principal waiting-room was hung with rich arras, as were all others, one better than another, with tall yeomen waiting ready to serve; great tables were spread, and a cupboard as long as the room was laden with white plate, with four huge plates of polished silver, set to reflect the great wax candles. But in the "chamber of presence" there was a sumptuous cloth of estate,

with many goodly gentlemen to serve; and again a cupboard as long as the whole room, the five top shelves filled with burnished silver plate, the lowest one garnished with massive gold, with immense candlesticks of gilt containing wax lights as big as torches. The whole place dazzled and glittered with light and radiance — the plates of silver that hung on the walls had in them huge perchers of burning wax, the immense chimneys were ablaze with flame.

At last, everything being ready, the officers caused the trumpeters to warn to supper. Then officers were sent to conduct the French guests to the halls appointed for the banquet, and no sooner were they all seated than up came dishes of such "costly subtleties and abundance" that the Frenchmen, as it seemed "were rapt in a heavenly paradise." Before the second course the Lord Cardinal came in, booted and spurred, and every one rising in his place Wolsey was greeted with an acclamation of joy. The Cardinal called for a chair, and seating himself in the midst of the high table he made merry with the rest of the company.

The second course, consisting of a hundred dishes, was now served, and caused the foreigners to stare with wonder: there were dishes rep-

resenting castles, churches, beasts, birds, fowls, and personages — some fighting with swords, some with guns and cross-bows, some vaulting and leaping, some dancing with ladies, others on horses in complete harness, justing with long sharp spears. Then Wolsey took a bowl of gold filled with hippocras, and taking off his cap drank to King Henry and then to the King of France, after which it is not surprising that many of the Frenchmen were “fain to be led to their beds.”

The Cardinal, who had eaten nothing yet, retired to his own apartment, divested himself of his spurs and boots, had supper alone, then returned to the banquet-hall among his guests.

During this time hundreds of yeomen and lackeys were busy carrying to the chambers of the guests basins and ewers of silver, great livery pots of wine and beer, bowls and goblets of silver and gilt, silver candlesticks, with both white and yellow lights of three sizes, staff torches of wax, fine manchets, and cheat loaves. And in spite of every room being furnished in this manner throughout all the house the cupboards in the two banqueting-halls were not once touched.

These displays, however, were even surpassed by the gorgeous train of ecclesiastical dignitaries connected with the Cardinal's chapel in the

Palace. He had a dean and a sub-dean, ten priests, a choir of twenty-two men and boys; and in a procession through the hall a hundred rich copes and other vestments might be counted; while he had for his daily life twelve gentlemen ushers, six gentlemen waiters for his private chamber, and nine lords, with two servants to wait on each, without counting forty other cup-bearers, carvers, and sewers, six yeomen ushers, eight grooms of the chamber, sixteen doctors and chaplains, two secretaries, three clerks, and four counsellors at law.

A gifted historian has drawn a picture of the Court of the great Cardinal. "Nobles vied with each other in the splendour of their retinue; poets, painters, and musicians were called upon to entertain the royal guest; and in the midst of these gorgeous festivities Henry and his young wife sat in the balconies or paraded in the gardens like Amadis and Oriana, the magnets to which every eye was attracted. The old romances, with their endless legends of enchanted castles, haunted and trackless wildernesses, cruel sorcerers, valiant knights, and devoted damsels, were the fashionable reading of the day, and it was not undignified for bishops and statesmen to compose masques and melodramas."

In 1529 Wolsey's fate was sealed.

"His misfortunes are such," said the French ambassador, "that his enemies, even though they were Englishmen, could not fail to pity him."

As soon as the great Cardinal had breathed his last Henry VIII began to make additions to the Palace. He built a tennis-court, a bowling-alley, and the splendid hall in the clock-court, the last of the mediæval creations of its kind, with its magnificent single hammer-beam roof, of seven compartments.

Henry spent his time in hunting, gaming, and making love; one queen succeeded another in rapid succession, tragedy followed comedy; and in the most romantic and delightful of spots his life became a round of merry jesting, interspersed with theological discussions and political intrigue.

.

At Hampton Court, in 1537, Edward VI was born, and his mother, Jane Seymour, died; and here, three years later, the ill-starred Catherine Howard took her place; here, in 1543, Henry married Catherine Parr; and here Edward the boy-king alighted like a phantom of royalty, passing away before he was old enough to realise the serene and placid beauty of the place.

Here, on Christmas Day, Mary Tudor enter-

tained her fickle Spanish consort, Philip, at a wonderful banquet, when the great hall shone with a thousand fantastic lamps flickering in a mellow glow over a sea of orange and opal, when Elizabeth, the future queen, supped at the royal table, and was served later with "a perfumed napkin and a plate of confects by the noble Lord Paget," retiring to her own apartments before the revels and masques of that romantic and memorable night.

To Hampton Court came Charles I, in 1625, to escape the plague then ravishing London; and he returned again twenty-two years later as a prisoner, escorted by soldiers, to make his escape three months later for a brief respite between Hampton and the headsman at Whitehall.

Here Charles II spent his honeymoon, and James II created a scandal by publicly receiving the Pope's Nuncio, and here the unromantic Queen Anne was wont to drink tea and take counsel from her ministers; and Alexander Pope, while taking his accustomed promenades with the beautiful Lady Hervey, embellished the conversation by witty phrases and poetic couplets.

.

Ambrosial was the epithet Byron applied to the region about Hampton Court, Richmond,

and Twickenham, while Chateaubriand called it a "terrestrial paradise." Hampton Court, situated on the Thames half-way between London and Windsor, is the gem of this terrestrial paradise, the one locality in England without a rival.

Old houses and palaces charm, not by their cost, nor even by the people who have lived in them, but by that rare and inscrutable combination of mystery, beauty, and illusion formed by a long series of historical events, ending at last in what may be termed the romantic and personal associations of the place. There are old sites which possess every thing needful save one: the magical ingredient best described by the word "atmosphere." Hence their bricks and stones seem bare, their towers bleak and barren; and their grounds may be elaborate and costly, yet uninteresting. We visit them but once. From no point of view does Hampton Court Palace suggest a quasi-ruin stripped of its glories. Never does it hint at fire or famine, having passed through wars, revolutions, and centuries of social change without being touched by mobs or bullets. It is a region of stately parks shrouded in dreamy enchantment, the limpid atmosphere often as mellow and serene as that of an Indian summer.

About these old brick walls you will find no pretentious ornaments. It is the art of being impressive without pretension. The whole place, with its buildings, courts, passages, halls, gardens, flowers, trees, and terraces, seems to have sprung from a dream of fairyland; for the onlooker is never made conscious of the efforts of the architect, the decorator, the professional restorer of cracked walls and crumbling towers. It has a naïve dignity of its own which the lover of Nature has seen nowhere else.

An immense fan-shaped garden, with lawns as soft and compact as a cloth of velvet, sprinkled with small white daisies, dotted here and there with yellow buttercups, in keeping with the mediæval simplicity of everything, is bordered and set off by rows of yew as old as the place itself, the symbolical tree of the primitive bards and mystics. And they are in their proper element here, in front of the great brick pile, their deep green forming a striking contrast to the airy lightness of the rows of willowy lime behind them. And what incomparable avenues of limes these are! No other tree would look so well here: the leaf of the elm is too small and compact, the foliage of the chestnut too luxuriant and opaque, the branches of the sycamore too sparse to

harmonise with the peculiar beauty and serene blithesomeness of Hampton Court.

Its flowers and flower-beds are unrivalled in Europe; the eye is bewildered, not so much by the colours as by the groupings of colour — the artless beauty everywhere displayed.

The matchless simplicity of arrangement seems careless, but in reality it is the result of science and natural art.

Great scarlet poppies, on long stems, droop over pillows of yellow pansies or beds of deep velvety purple, the faces all turned one way, with pale saffron eyes fixed on the sun. The colours of May are somewhat flamboyant, but June ushers in the ochre and the amber, the mediæval yellows, in keeping with the dull reddish brick and the old walls, with their flat coping-stones, devoid of ostentation. And June brings the rose, here to be seen everywhere, in beds and clinging all about the walls, as far as one can see, mingled with a hundred other shapes and hues. And the long, old walls and borders festooned with trailing vines, heavy with scented bloom, present, in August, a picture of all the hues of red, pink, and scarlet, interspersed with mauve and saffron and clusters of white lilies, all brought to the utmost perfection of tint and form.

A bewitching simplicity in park and garden adds an indefinable element to the historical associations of site and structure. It gives to the ensemble an air of poetic refinement, a natural grace to be met with nowhere else. Indeed, the best art is achieved solely through the abandonment of the artist to his inspirations; in his work he must imagine himself free, even if he is not. And Wolsey, in building Hampton Court, must have been impelled to the task as by a decree of fate. The longer one meditates on the unique beauty of the whole the more one realises the ennobling quality of this beauty; the more one considers its imminent meaning in the scheme of things, its satisfying influence, and its universal relation to art, history, religion, and romance, the greater will be the feeling of gratitude to this man who abandoned himself to the conception and execution of a work which has given instruction and delight to artists and lovers of Nature for nearly four centuries.

The two chief things which give this Tudor palace its peculiar charm are its red brick and its quaint forms. The new part, erected in imitation of Versailles by William III, is not without its charm, and the two palaces do not conflict, in spite of the difference in period and architecture.

But, fortunately for lovers of the natural, William did not succeed in turning Hampton Court into an English Versailles. At the Court of Louis XIV things were made to shine and dazzle. Art became fantastic and superficial. Caprice and convention usurped the place of the natural and the intimate.

The *fêtes champêtres* of Watteau depict the life and sentiment of Versailles; the pictures of Claude Lorraine suggest the atmosphere of Hampton Court. The first expressed the Gallic spirit of the time, beginning with the founding of Versailles and lasting till the romantic period of 1830, when Hugo, inspired by Chateaubriand, brought new life to French art and literature. The types of the Watteau period are symbolised by Louis XIV at its beginning and by Marie Antoinette at its close. We know all about them; there are no illusions, because there was no poetry. Under Louis thought was didactic and formal: Labruyère was the polished essayist, La Rochefoucauld the trenchant wit, Racine the elegant weaver of the "alexandrine," Condé the polite hero, Madame de Maintenon the inflexible heroine. With but few exceptions every one, from the King to the head cook, seemed to belong to one family. There were rules for walking, talk-

ing, eating, sitting, yawning, bowing, and backing out. Louis himself was afraid to peep from his bed-curtains in the morning to address a servant without first donning his pompous wig.

How different were people and things at Hampton!

Wolsey began by being original; Henry VIII lived his own life; Mary, the vehement mystic, with her mind made up, followed; and Elizabeth succeeded with a long period of stately and romantic triumphs. Every one of these lived an individual life and copied no one. And somehow they managed to leave natural things as they found them. At Hampton Court they had the good sense to assist Nature; at Versailles Nature was trimmed and suppressed. The laws of landscape harmony are as absolute as those of music. The romantic mood framed in renascent art, expressed in such perfection at Hampton, is not the result of fancy or caprice; plays, pictures, and palaces do not happen to be romantic or poetic; and, reason about it as we may, these buildings, avenues, trees, and flowers are what we see them because of an innate harmony of object and sentiment. Everything at Hampton Court is in keeping with the things that surround it, fitting the ensemble of earth, sky, and water. No wonder

it is a paradise of feathered hosts! The song of birds, the ripple of brooks, the swish of winds in the tree-tops satisfy the musician, while the mellow tints in field, atmosphere, and forest satisfy the artist.

There is consolation in the soft, wistful serenity of this extraordinary union of mediævalism and modernity, a satisfying sense of the eternal in all this romance of artless art, an inexorable calm in the long, stately avenues bordered with giant limes, leading the eye to other vistas too distant to distinguish anything but a soft veil of indefinable blue. The use of the yard-measure is here never apparent. Versailles perfected conventional art and conventional forms. The witty took the place of the poetic, mechanical phrases the place of natural sentiment. It seems as if the French nobles, artists, and architects conspired together to force Nature to walk on stilts. There is not a trace of romantic mediævalism, not a suggestion of poetic mysticism, not a corner left anywhere for the display of spontaneous beauty. The structure of the Château forbids any illusion suggested by form. Nor is its history more than a development of sordid Court intrigues, ending with the scandal of the diamond necklace. The truth is, at Versailles kings, queens, and courtiers

were stage performers in what looks to us now as a comedy of errors which only once bordered on tragedy: when the hungry hordes of Paris arrived at the gates with spikes garnished with human heads. They were puppets skilled in the etiquette of the table, the chase, and the minuet, the whole spiced with wit and flavoured with epigram.

As the Versailles of the Capets was made up of people who were always rehearsing a political or social rôle, Hampton Court, in the days of the Tudors, and even at later periods, was the home of characters. Henry, Mary, and Elizabeth stood boldly for what they were: strong or weak, wise or foolish. And with what pomp Wolsey unrolled the pageant from the wheels of time by erecting Hampton Court for the unimagined dramas of the epoch, consecrating it, by every device of naïve wonder and art, to the exigent mysteries of the future, with its mediæval banquetting-hall, its dream-like chapel, its red-brick turrets and towers, lattice and oriel windows, the most quaint and bewitching ever conceived by architect or poet. Here, romance, pageant, and poetry were one. Wolsey was both last and first — he brought mediævalism to a close and ushered in the English renaissance. Hampton Court and Elizabeth made the Shakespearian era possible.

Wolsey cast over it a glamour which time cannot dim, Henry VIII immortalised it with his fatal whims and some of the grimmest dramas of the English Reformation, Mary by her sentimental and religious vehemence, Elizabeth by the ardent glow of heroic and passionate romance, while Shakespeare affixed his magic seal to the triumphs and tragedies of the whole Tudor dynasty.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

IT is interesting to note that both in England and America humour is losing itself in wit and wit in cynicism. Material success added a bitter drop to Mark Twain's humour, and the same kind of success has added a taste of hyssop to the medicinal catnip, snap-dragon, and hellebore of Mr. Bernard Shaw's genius. But the most curious thing of all is the fact that G. B. S. expects to win people to Socialism by a sting-bee process instead of by pleasant potions of honey from the common hive. Perhaps he is imitating the tactics of Disraeli, who understood the crowd and used his wit as a fanning machine to clear the way to the goal of his choice, who stood just outside the political circus, hailed the idlers and clubmen by clever antics, filled his tent at the side-show, and then began a bare-back performance in a ring in which the other riders used pads, palfreys, and salaam alek carpets to ease the fall of their reckless and break-neck somersaults.

Anyhow, none of them can plunge with the dexterity of G. B. S. There is a wonderful elasticity in his bouncing-board. He is a past-

grand-master in the art of diving, although he sometimes goes to the bottom, and seemingly for good; but he always bobs up like a bladder, and by a hocus-pocus of word massage and mental calisthenics he resuscitates himself and is at it again.

No matter what G. B. S. does he is always diverting, but, like a good many of his "comrades," he does not care much for the humble life. He believes in success. He does not believe in being a communistic caterpillar; it is better to be a butterfly, because there are no limits to what a butterfly may do, from sitting on a proletarian paling to flitting over fields and fashionable pleasure grounds, alighting on a daisy here, a buttercup there, a cabbage leaf here, a rose bush somewhere else, for no full-grown butterfly will consent to flutter long on a cabbage. Fine flowers and fine scents are wanted, and these can only be had in the gardens of success.

If it is harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven than it is for a camel to enter the eye of the needle, it is still harder for rich artists and writers to become serious Socialists. And some of Mr. Shaw's "comrades" are doing their level best to become richer. If you ask them for their patent of equality they will show you a pair

of patent boots, with the answer that equality may reside under tanned hide, but not under curled hair. Brain power is good, but success is still better. It makes millions of unthinking people mistake sophistry for philosophy and selfishness for the teaching of democratic saints.

G. B. S. likes to preach against sentiment and preside at anti-vivisection meetings. Is it his love for dogs that makes him a cynic, or his cynicism that makes him pity the dogs? Conundrum that can only be explained by the great Saint Bernard himself. It is probable that if someone were to tell us that a cabbage has nerves, a beet a heart, and a turnip a gizzard, G. B. S. would eschew them and begin to chew something else. We are to show sentiment, but never in the place where most people expect it. The proper thing seems to consist in doing the opposite thing. If the partition that separates wit from madness is only a page of tissue paper the partition might disappear by the turning of a leaf. Some people prefer the sentimental to the cynical because, like somebody's cocoa, it goes furthest and lasts the longest. In some things it is better to side with the majority.

When G. B. S. is not plunging he swims *entre deux eaux*, as when he writes: "If the Judgment

Day were fixed for the centenary of Poe's birth there are among the dead only two men (Poe and Whitman) born since the Declaration of Independence whose plea for mercy could avert a prompt sentence of damnation on the entire American nation."

Our humorist ignores Lincoln. The great President was neither an artist nor a poet, and Mr. Shaw is bound to appear in artistic company, even though he should miss the company of the greatest humanist of the past hundred years. But in ignoring Lincoln, G. B. S. negatives his attitude as a democratic leader. It is like talking about the history of Socialism while ignoring Fourier, the history of art while ignoring Michelangelo, the history of music while ignoring Beethoven.

G. B. S. is often most amusing when he intends to be serious, as when he writes about Mark Twain and music. "Twain," he says, "described *Lohengrin* as a 'shiveree,' though he liked the wedding chorus, which shows that Mark, like Dickens, was not properly educated; for Wagner would have been just the man for him if he had been trained to understand and use music as Mr. Rockefeller was trained to understand and use money." So! then, a man can be

trained to appreciate what he cannot possibly understand! But G. B. S. goes one better when he says: "America did not teach Mark Twain the language of the great ideals, just as England did not teach it to Dickens and Thackeray." The notion of a writer like Twain occupying himself with any ideal is very funny. The truth is — Mark Twain is the greatest cynic America ever produced. A good many people have failed to grasp the fact, because his cynicism is varnished by a species of bland and natural humour, which hides the reality.

The notion of Mark Twain dabbling in "Ideals" is excruciating; this word pronounced over the graves of Dickens and Thackeray would make them turn in their coffins. The American humorist never cared to be an expert in anything but the dangerous science of piloting boats full of passengers on the Mississippi; G. B. S. would undertake to pilot all England through the shallows of art, the whirlpools of politics, and the social rapids of no-man's land, a place that looks to some people ten times more dangerous than the shifting sand-bars of the Mississippi. Mark Twain looked after the safety of bodies; G. B. S. would look after mind and body. He writes as if mind can be manufactured. He is labouring

under the delusion that art is a trick and authority book knowledge.

Darwin wrote: "The longer I live the more inclined I am to agree with Francis Galton that most of our faculties are innate and that what is acquired is very little." These words should be pondered just now, when discrimination and judgment seem to be about as cheap in the world of distracted wits as footballs in the world of distorted sports.

Mr. Shaw is not capering in a fool's paradise; he has the range of a new garden of Eden, where he alone is the only regenerate Adam, and where from the tall tree-tops of fruitarian delights he lets the cocoa-nuts of communistic conundrums crack on the bewildered heads of the bourgeoisie to give them the only taste of the milk of human kindness they will ever get at his hands; his humour is greater than his humanism.

G. B. S. is our master cynic. He is without a rival even in the salon and the dining-room. His dress matches nothing from curtains to cantaloupes. Artists and poets do pretty much what they please. Whistler tied a blue ribbon in his hair and wore an impudent eye-glass. But Socialism, when it is wrapped in wit and tied in knotty paradox, alarms the average

business man. They take G. B. S. too seriously. Even when he presents his paradox in the most beautiful bonbon baskets, with gold and silver trimmings, they fear some intellectual dynamite at the bottom. He mystifies people by his plays, walks the tight-rope of theatrical surprises, stands on his heels, toes, or head with the balance-pole of paradox quivering in the teeth of the public; for no one knows which end of the pole will go highest in the air — the Tolstoy-Ibsen or the Nietzsche-Wagner end.

But, in spite of all, some people will continue to ask, in what does G. B. S. take himself seriously? This question might be answered by asking some others: How does he compare with some of the masters he most admires? Has he the tartaric sincerity of Tolstoy? Has he the long-suffering patience of Ibsen, the passion of Wagner, the fine frenzy of Nietzsche?

Mr. Shaw's weakness lies in the intellectuality of his wit. He can tear down but he cannot construct; he can scatter but he cannot concentrate, and the instruction he affords is rarely in proportion to the amusement.

THE AGNOSTIC AGONY

THE chief difference between pessimism and agnosticism is this: a pessimist may believe in a creed, but an agnostic has to live without the aid of any religious system or "ism." A man can be a pessimist and a Christian; he cannot be an agnostic and take comfort in any ism or religion. The moment he "believes" he ceases to be an agnostic. The danger lies in becoming fanatical with conviction and an incurable cynic with scepticism. It is a fact that an avowed sceptic is never welcome in any company of people. The reason is plain: he can sympathise with no one's sentiments.

A period of agnosticism gives some minds time to think, look about, and choose; but if the period be prolonged a sort of psychological atrophy begins to develop which often ends in a state of chronic apathy, out of which no psychic incident or influence can rouse them.

Some men boast of their ability to doubt, as others boast of their good fortune in perceiving and knowing. I have noticed that some agnostics are prone to damn the opinions and beliefs of

others; but the people who believe do less sneering and mocking. The fact is, as soon as we say we don't know we assume a negative attitude.

No general could long retain command of any body of troops if he gave it out that he was in ignorance of the strength and the movements of the enemy; it is his business to know something about the other side, for if the enemy remain invisible the greater will be the clamour to find out some facts about his strength, position, morale. The general, I say, who sits down and says he knows nothing would not long be left in command of any body of troops. His business is to send out scouts and spies to bring back some knowledge, little or great, of the other side.

In the commercial world the law of knowledge rules, as it does elsewhere. The merchant who refuses to look about him and keep up with the rules of progress will soon see his business pass beyond his control. The modern thinker who refuses to probe, analyse, investigate, and search out, places himself in a negative position, and he is promptly ruled out of the race of thinkers.

But there is a great change in the attitude of intelligent agnostics; for agnostics are of two kinds — the wilfully apathetic and those who

wish to learn. Certainly no man can call himself a thinker who refuses to do battle with the mysterious forces which encompass us round about, as palpable as the air we breathe. If there were no mysteries there would be no such thing as science, and if book-learning contained all practical wisdom there would be no such thing as intuition. Everything is like everything else. There is but one source; but an infinite variety of appearances. The soul of the universe is one — its manifestations are without limit in variation. Phenomena produce mystery; the whole conscious world is engaged in the unravelling of mystery.

Consciously or unconsciously, every human being is engaged in the pursuit to become wiser. This is the aim and meaning of conscious existence. Without this aim there would be no meaning attached to life. I think it impossible, at the present moment, for any true man of science to deny the force and influence of anything visible or invisible. The scientist who to-day declares that a thing is not true because he has not seen it and felt it is put down as shallow and superficial. The paradox is amusing: mystery is rendering mystery less mysterious! We have but to go to wireless telegraphy and hypnotism to see how

the unscientific is controlling and dominating science, so-called.

The old-fashioned scientist, who denied everything new, like the old-fashioned musician, is a being without voice or power in the world to-day. For although he may talk and write and preach, no one pays him serious attention. It is the manifestation of the invisible which rivets the attention of the world now, not the denials, the subterfuges, and the explanations of the positive. The word "science" has now little of the old meaning, and a new word may have to be invented to cover the attitude, the aims, and the power of the new tendency. The man who hopes and expects is far more interesting than the man who believes nothing, expects nothing. Illusion is more fascinating than disillusion. No man can have an active influence on any body of people who admits his inability to proceed farther, be it through light or through darkness. Illusions are transitory realities; in accepting them as such we are often led to the permanent. The agnostic, in getting rid of all illusion, has placed himself in a state of helplessness. He is like a man who has fasted too long — his digestive organs have come, at last, to refuse nourishment.

I believe that there are as many diseases in

the mental as in the physical man. Every ism, no matter under what guise, must be classed as a mental disorder the moment we are bound up in it. The instant we cease to progress we enter upon a decline, whether it be towards intellectual stagnation or towards physical decay. But mystery, illusion, and curiosity keep the world from universal decadence. The forces which impel men to move on and on, through maze after maze of disappointment and disillusion, are hope and egoism.

One of the principal reasons for new isms is this: without new ones the old would hold us fast; we should be sitting still and enjoying the so-called revelations of our grandfathers. Every new ism, therefore, is an effort towards greater freedom. It makes no difference what the belief is, every man who remains quiescent gives himself out as a negative quantity in the world of thought and action. The thirsty who sit down in the oasis, and remain there, are still in the desert; the world of the contented man is a speck around which the simoon sweeps the sands of isolation and forgetfulness.

Agnosticism properly belongs to a period of scientific transition. Critical minds wait; but while they wait doubt knocks at the door, and

the door is often open to scepticism. And so, without knowing it, the agnostic glides into a state of positiveness which he mistakes for truth. His mind is positive, while his senses are inactive. The agnostic attitude seemed natural and proper from 1860 to 1895. The tide turned with the conjunction of several influences in the material and psychological world a few years ago. Tyndall, Haeckel, and Huxley all did a work which had to be done. But that work was limited to chemical and biological demonstration. It was science, but science of the old school.

Just as the reign of a man of genius like Goethe makes thousands of intelligent men appear like pigmies, so the revelations in the domain of light and sound, electric transmission, and mental suggestion, make the discoveries of Darwin and all his contemporaries appear trivial in comparison. The simple fact that thought can be transmitted, as well as electric currents, without wires, is enough to stupefy the conservative mind. Even now, efforts are being made to develop an independent action of mind and will outside of the body, so that while the body is sleeping or reposing in one place the mind, or double, may visit a friend or a locality, at a great distance, and return with the knowledge which it went

to seek. Indeed, several schools of hypnotism claim this faculty for some of their pupils. What this means may be conjectured if we consider for a moment the possibility of a mind gifted in this way setting to work to discover the secrets of some great chemical business or political intrigue.

We are at the beginning of a cycle of invisible forces; the coming age will be one of invisible action. The submarine torpedo-boat typifies the development of the century. This is pre-eminently the age of mind, as the past century was the age of matter. So far as we know, electricity is the soul of visible form. What we call brain-waves have an analogy with electric waves.

In former times intuitions were presented in systems of philosophy. It is no exaggeration to say that the discoveries and inventions of the past ten years have made child's-play of every known system of philosophy. Never again will any man be able to build up a philosophical system which will stand the assaults of the new science. The little that we now know is more than all the philosophers of the past knew, from Aristotle to Leibnitz. The absurdity of the old systems may be summed up in the Positivism of Auguste Comte, which aimed at hard-and-fast

rules of life and conduct, as if such things could ever be in a world in its infancy.

Every fresh discovery delivers a blow at the old and fixed formulas; every disclosure of mental power bids defiance to some stereotyped belief. But the most wonderful fact of the present is that we are being ruled by the seeming impossible. Some of the most successful inventors of the present day would have passed for madmen twenty years ago. The so-called dreamers are now the men of action; they have proved their power and competence, and thinking people turn to them for more miracles of discovery and invention.

While people are tired of ethical platitudes, they are equally tired of scepticism. Scientific progress has made it impossible for thinking minds to put up with either one of these postulates. As in electrical invention the word "impossible" is no longer spoken, so in the realm of the mind the word no longer discourages the philosopher and psychologist. Hesitancy and fear have an affinity. No one who is in doubt can attain that plane of fearlessness so necessary to progress and achievement.

Every thinker who has accomplished anything excellent has begun by believing in something.

First, he has confidence in himself; second, he has confidence in others; third, he feels that in the eternal mysteries there resides a law and a force which may be revealed by flashes of intuition; fourth, he knows that the world is not standing still. The greatest pessimists have felt something of all this, but the most typical agnostics have not. For no one can wait and work at the same time. They have made the grave mistake of not seeking to disentangle themselves from the web of doubt and uncertainty; they sit still and rub their eyes at every fresh discovery, and cry out: "It may be true, but I don't know."

Would it be possible for a merchant or shopkeeper to hold his business successfully while saying he knows nothing about the business methods of a formidable rival? Look where we may, it is the men who hope and work who are triumphing. And the people who are wide awake to new inventions and discoveries are the ones who do the best business and make the greatest progress. In the great struggle of the future the nation most keenly alive to intellectual and invisible force will triumph. The nations most bound up in the material will succumb. Intellect will dominate material force, no matter how formidable the material force may be.

The future belongs to scientific power, applied by genius of a psychic and intuitive order. The dreamers of the future will be the ones who depend on the old-fashioned methods of scientific research. They will dream on and on in a sort of fool's paradise, placing crowns and kingdoms at the mercy of a cannon shot, and they will lose. The time is not far distant when a science of the mind will treat material science as if it were a plaything. The rulers of the future need not make themselves visible in public; their work will be done in silence. Material riches will play but a secondary part, and Mammon will be forced under by purely intellectual pressure. No people are more conscious of limitation than materialists. But the day is coming when the psychic power of the intellect will kill materialism. There will be no battle, no strife, no intrigue; the blows will be delivered silently, like the stroke of an electric bolt.

I am not a believer in bloody revolutions. I see signs that millionaires are beginning to consider the question of spiritual versus material power. Materialism and agnosticism have supplied nothing in the place of the old superstitions. Did not Darwinism prove that the survival of the fittest was the natural order of life? And what

is a rich man but the survival of the fittest? The fact was so patent that every miner and railway magnate could appropriate it.

At its worst, the doctrine of the survival of the fittest is a gilded lie; at its best, a ghost at a banquet. But the old scientists and the new millionaires are beginning to perceive that mind is superior to muscle, that it will eventually control and dominate the impulses and ambitions of the brute instincts in man. Up till quite recently rich men had a sort of contempt for genius, looking on it as something visionary. For what had genius to do with the buying and selling of stocks, the building of railroads, or the smelting of ore? But with the discoveries of Edison it was seen that genius could, directly or indirectly, influence the money market. It was seen that this wizard was revolutionising science. The rich began to consider the meaning of intuition and genius; they had here a force to reckon with, and, above all, a force to respect. Later came wireless telegraphy, hypnotic control, and mental-intercommunication, to accomplish for the vulgar world, as well as the learned world, what the genius of Edison had left undone, and to open the eyes of all but the blind to the possibilities of the future.

It is a fact that doubt, hesitancy, scepticism are inherently destructive, and that what affects the mind also affects the body. But the mental agony endured by some agnostics can hardly be defined in words, as I well know from personal experience. A chronic state of agnosticism not only renders a man discontented with himself, but it renders him irritable and contradictory whenever the belief of others comes up for discussion. In spite of the attitude of some writers of the present, the age of stoicism is past. A man who is indifferent can neither fill the position of thinker nor scientist. And indifference is only make-believe when we see it turn into fury — which is half envy and half spite — against some author who dares to express something a little more hopeful and a good deal more helpful than the humdrum of the ordinary writer.

I remember the outcry against the attitude of Robert G. Ingersoll, who at one time was in a fair way to make agnostics of the majority of thinking Americans. While the most eloquent preachers in the different churches were listened to by wealthy congregations they made no progress. The churches had plenty of substance, but no spirit. He attacked them on their weakest side, and had it all his own way for twenty years.

But there came a day when Colonel Ingersoll found himself too old, and fixed in his ideas, to take any interest in the new order of things. Young men were bringing with them a new science and a new faith. The future was for the young inventors and thinkers, and Colonel Ingersoll belonged to the past. But were he beginning his career now he would be compelled to face a whole world of electric, magnetic, and psychic problems, to deny any one of which would make him appear ridiculous.

Robert Ingersoll filled a gap in the world of thought which Nature intended him to fill. Everything has its own time. Phenomena come and go in cyclic order. There is nothing before or after the proper time. We know what a scientific mind means to-day, and we know what a scientific mind meant thirty years ago; and the thinkers of to-day are as far removed from the thinkers of 1870 as electricity is from steam. We know steam to be a crude and clumsy thing compared with electricity, and to-morrow we shall awake to the fact that mind is just as superior to the crude electric current.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DRESS

MEN wear fine clothes for two principal reasons, to wit: to satisfy their vanity and to impress other people. Sometimes men dress well from an innate sense of refinement, and sometimes from sheer business motives, hating the very clothes which worldly policy forces them to put on. Dress, therefore, is not the silly thing that some would-be moralists think it, but a power, an influence, a symbol in the world of fact and reality, a power which even the moralists are often the first to acknowledge.

Why did the late Mr. Gladstone wear a very high and prominent collar? What made Disraeli wear a dandy waistcoat? Why did Tennyson walk about London with a flowing purple mantle? Why did George Borrow carry a huge green umbrella? Why did Liszt walk about Paris with a huge red umbrella? Why does a man wear a single eye-glass? And last, but not least, why do judges and lawyers wear wigs? Lawyers and judges wear wigs and gowns to impress both saints and sinners with the dignity of the law.

Precisely. And men of talent and genius wear conspicuous things for exactly the same reason. Tennyson wore his purple cloak because it not only suited him, but it distinguished him from the fashionable nobodies of Bond Street, and George Borrow carried his green umbrella in Richmond Park as a sort of canopy to protect the head of a man the like of whom never walked in Richmond Park before. But there are business and material reasons for men wearing striking apparel. Some men wear silk hats because they think a high hat gives them a dignity which they themselves do not possess. Some wear eye-glasses to distinguish them from the millions who could not be hired to wear them.

The philosophy of dress! What a world there is in that phrase. The people who ignore this philosophy are perhaps the people who have failed in life. We are living in a world where men judge everything by appearances. It makes no difference what your banking account may be, if, from an attack of gout, you are compelled to go about in old patched-up shoes, for you will be taken for a ruined gentleman or some bohemian actor waiting for an engagement.

One philosopher has told us that the world is a lie, and another that all we see and touch is

illusion. Certainly the greatest error we can fall into is the error of not taking the world as it is. I had travelled about for years, ignoring the value of dress and growing more and more indifferent to all that pertains to fashion, considering life too serious to lose time over what I regarded as trivial and superfluous. A friend said to me: "As you won't dress in the fashion, you ought to wear, as a matter of material benefit, one of the presents your friends have given you. There is the king's ring. Wear that and you will soon see its good effects." Jewellery I always disliked, and the king's ring, in particular, was so big, so brilliant, and so conspicuous that the few times I wore it I always put it off with a sense of relief, and it lay for months, and even years, hidden away with other souvenirs from friends titled and untitled. "What," I asked, "has jewellery to do in my life? and how were such things as rings and scarf-pins to influence me in the world of thought, in the region of pure intellect?"

But the same friend answered: "You are not reasoning like a philosopher. We are living in a world of matter and of fact, and not in the clouds; consider things and people as they are." And then he laid stress on these words: "You have made a great mistake in not looking upon

that ring and other similar objects as symbols of power."

Then I began to reason about it. Was the ring, indeed, a symbol of power?

"Don't you see," said the friend, "that such presents were not given you for doing nothing? Do you think for a moment that such an object as the king's ring could have been obtained if you were a clerk in a city bank?"

"I admit," I said, "that these souvenirs all represent so much money, and in looking at them the ordinary mind immediately thinks of their material value."

"But this is not all," said the friend; "there is another side of the question, and one of much more importance; artists know that these things represent something which money cannot purchase; in your case they symbolise a success which came to you unsought. But leaving aside these reasons, take my advice and wear the king's ring to offset the bad effect of your unfashionable clothes."

"Here is an idea," I said. "I will wear the king's ring and take particular note of what follows."

The result was both amusing and instructive. Cabmen demanded a shilling a mile more, news-

boys expected a penny for a ha'penny paper. The ring had an extraordinary effect on waiters. Under the electric light the big ruby shot forth crimson flashes which were reflected in the facets of the brilliants surrounding it, and every motion of the hand was the cause of new combinations of colour. The waiters expected their tips to be just double. But all these details were insignificant compared to the effect of the ring on another class of minds, the minds of that large class who are incapable of any deep or critical thought. In their eyes the ring had changed me. I was no longer the humble person of old whom they knew but did not honour. They now saw in me a personage and a power. What I was and what I could do made very little difference with them. The one thing which stood out beyond all others was the possession of this ring; it made them sentimental, it caused them to look upon my presence in their house as an honour. Here was a force at once visible and tangible. In its light the snobbish mind saw nothing but royalty.

Thackeray claimed all Englishmen as snobs; but supposing eighty per cent of the people to be snobs, that would leave a powerful majority to live, move, and act in a world of illusion and show. Read and tremble, says the edict of the

Chinese dictator. Look and kow-tow, says the modern bauble worshipper. After becoming acquainted with these facts no one can wonder at the talented young artists who seek, by hook or by crook, to paint the portrait of some titled personage. But the game of snobbery works both ways; it is played by lords and by laymen, by grand ladies and by ladies' maids, by painters and the people who sit to be painted, by statesmen and the tradespeople who supply them with wine and meat. Why does a nobleman go about with his coat of arms painted on his carriage door? Does the earl wish to impress the marquis? Does the marquis expect to influence the duke? Not at all. Among themselves the game is a bore. A nobleman goes about with the symbols of nobility emblazoned on his carriage to impress the world of snobbery. The snobs are deeply impressed, and it does not hurt the lord.

BENJAMIN DISRAELI

THE nineteenth century may yet be called the most "dæmonic" of all the centuries of the Christian era. At its beginning three men were living who, in the words of Goethe, "were controlled by the dæmonic afflatus of their genius," namely, Byron, Bonaparte, and Disraeli. Of these three Bonaparte and Disraeli attained the miraculous. A mistake has been made in alluding to the first half of Queen Victoria's reign as a period of sentimentality. As a matter of fact it was sentimental only in art; but the long necks in the pictures of Rossetti were more than matched by the long heads in Parliament; the languorous eyes in Burne-Jones were more than rivalled by the Mephistophelean glances of wily Whigs and the Machiavellian winks of a Tory Demiurgus whose advent all the wiseacres failed to predict and all the fools failed to prevent. No; the novels, the manners, the fertile Disraelian wit more than counterbalanced the lotus-languors of the come-into-the-garden Maudies of the early Victorian period.

Byron was a sentimental Don Juan who turned

the heads of women and the stomachs of men. Disraeli turned all heads, touched all fancies, wrought upon all hearts, opened all pocket-books, filled all imaginations, and brought to the festive board of British politics the spice of a new life, a ragout unnamed in the political cookery-books, unknown to the most fastidious faddists of the Parliamentary palate, a dish of birds of a feather which had refused to flock together, but which, when caught, killed, and baked in a pie, rose when the pie was opened and sang in chorus "Rule Britannia" to the baton of Benjamin Disraeli, Prime Minister of England by the Grace of God, most of the landlords, and all the publicans. Never before was such a thing seen with the naked eye, never was such a thing heard with the naked ear. People who were not stricken with wonder would be likely to remain unmoved at the sound of the last trump.

Bonaparte struck terror into all Europe, but he did so with sabre and bullet. People could see him at the work even if they failed to understand how his work was done. He seemed to his soldiers to be part of themselves. They regarded him as a descended God made one with the common *esprit de corps*, democratic as well as dæmonic; they followed blindly where they could

not see, and obeyed willingly what they could not understand.

With all his colossal originality Napoleon the Great was less dæmonic, less oriental, than Disraeli. Bonaparte often blundered, and he came to his defeat through a blunder that showed more madness than sanity. He possessed will, tact, daring, originality, but he lacked patience and composure. The serene Hebraic spirit was not his. Serenity means supremacy. Once lose the sense of equanimity and the balance of power is gone. An ambitious, irritable man is doomed. That was the doom of Napoleon. The supreme minds are those that know themselves. A man can afford to wait when he understands his own powers, the meaning of parties, the pretensions of his enemies, and the chimeras of the world. While men with limitations are in a hurry, the others, possessing a sense of the eternal, are never tempted to force events, never tempted to hurry through the phenomena of life.

Understand a man's mind and you can defeat him in his aims, his plans, his ambitions. No one understood Disraeli. And yet the man in the street will tell you he understands the wit in the play, the clown in the circus, the dandy in the red waistcoat. Not these do people under-

stand. What people understand is the speaker without wit, the writer without humour, the politician without imagination, the preacher without passion.

Beau Brummell died in 1840, and in that year another dandy found himself in a conspicuous place on the stage of London life. But what a difference between the two dandies, Brummell and Disraeli! The first was a fool, the second a genius who played at burlesque because he knew the fools would like it. Captivate them and you have won half the battle. The foolish are won through the sight, the weak through hunger, the vain by flattery, the wicked by ambition, the cunning by promises, and the wise by knowledge and judgment. The new dandy made up his mind to give all a taste in turn. In the beginning he made himself as picturesque as it was possible to be without becoming a peacock or a bird of paradise, and he managed to surpass them in his strut and rival them in colour. He was a human chanticleer. He began to crow as a chicken and fought in the Parliamentary cockpit when his spurs were mere corns and his wings pin feathers. Well might the Puritans cry, "Coxcomb!" He stormed the barnyard first, the hen-house second, the House of Commons

third, then the lordly House of the Turkey Cocks, whose cry is, "Gobble, gobble, and let the sparrows take the crumbs!" The idle were intensely amused, society was kept bobbing up and down like a devil in a bottle, but the men in search of power were seized with mingled feelings of wonder, fear, admiration, and panic.

Whence came this Titan who began his career as a social mountebank? Who was this Jew without prestige, this politician without a pedigree, this upstart without a fortune? Well might his enemies scratch their heads and ask if their pyramid of statescraft did not hide moreummies than men, more dummies than live issues.

We are a peculiar people.

When we call a statesman a charlatan we mean that he has the true political afflatus, when we call a poet a charlatan we mean that he has the true poetic afflatus, and when we call an artist a charlatan we mean, of course, that he possesses the Whistlerian root that will grow not brussels sprouts, but roses with thorns enough to make prickly foolscaps for every R. A. in the three kingdoms.

As Disraeli rose step by step he was greeted with stronger and stronger epithets. The admiration of his enemies knew no bounds. They cried

in a chorus, "Charlatan, mountebank, adventurer, impostor!" In the meantime he kept his wits, he stored his irony, he reserved his sarcasm and wore on his face the impervious mask of perpetual serenity, Nature's hall-mark of dæmonic genius. Nor did he walk alone in his dashing glory. He was surrounded by social meteors, sparks from the wheel of fashion and passing fame, dynamical dandies, Count D'Orsay, Bulwer Lytton, Brummell, and others, who made Disraeli's sun appear all the brighter in comparison with the dandies who wanted but a whiff of creative afflatus to make their intellects shine like their clothes.

Disraeli was a bard who preferred oriental prose to verse, and the poetic license of Parliament to the practice of Byronic rhyme.

He was the first modern to turn the tables on the prophets by forestalling their predictions, the greatest practical pessimist since Moses, the clearest seer since Daniel. It required a serene eye, an unruffled brow, and a menacing top-knot to enter the lion's den at Westminster with nothing but words to allure and nothing but manners to fascinate. He was not long there when he began to twist their tails, pull their teeth, singe their manes, and clip their claws

without using so much as a sniff of chloroform. He soon became the whip of the whole menagerie, as well as tamer of lions, wild cats, hyenas, and the leopards who longed to change their spots as well as their seats.

Like all men of dæmonic genius, he had his moods, his days, his seasons, when he thought, spoke, and did what he pleased. At one moment he lured the proletariat from the flesh pots of Egypt by a mess of pottage, at another he kept his party from attempting a second crossing of the Red Sea before he was ready to divide the waters, at another he swapped hobby-horses in the middle of a doubtful stream, and he actually hobbled the Liberals to the skirts of unhappy chance at a time when Gladstone and his bishops were getting ready to walk the aisles of untrammelled freedom in the most flowing robes ever invented to show off the new and flouncing crinoline.

SAVONAROLA

CHRISTIAN Italy twice endured a wave of what seemed like universal madness. The first arrived with the breaking up of the Roman Empire, the second arrived about the time of Savonarola's birth in 1452. The first was caused by the slow dissolution of paganism, the second by a revival of paganism.

In the fifteenth century prelates and philosophers were far more concerned with the writings of Aristotle and Plato than they were with the precepts of the saints. With the revival of classical learning in Italy came rapacious greed, cruelty, and fierce personal struggles for temporal power. Science and philosophy had no place for religion in the Christian sense. The old vices returned. Rome and Florence in the latter part of the fifteenth century played the old rôles of Jerusalem, Athens, and the Latin Emperors.

Classicism has always meant, not a revival of power, but a preparation towards decline.

Up to the present time a national renaissance has meant nothing more than what the hectic flush meant on the cheeks of a consumptive. As

for the "humanities," Savonarola has told us what that word meant in his day: "Throughout all Christendom, in the mansions of the great prelates and lords, there is no concern, save for poetry and the critical art; go thither and thou shalt find them all with books of the humanities in their hands, telling one another that they can guide men's souls by means of Virgil, Horace, and Cicero, and there is no prelate nor lord that hath not intimate dealings with some astrologer who fixeth the hour and moment in which he is to ride out or undertake some piece of business." They were unable to distinguish *inter bonum et malum, inter verum et falsum*.

As for Savonarola, the greatest Italian of his time, and one of the greatest minds Christianity ever produced, the man who gave Florence the best form of republican government it had ever enjoyed, he boasted of hearing voices in the air, of seeing the sword of the Almighty, and of being the ambassador of Florence to the Virgin! In that day science was a thing which developed madness on one hand and clairvoyance on the other.

The lunatic asylums of our day would be filled with philosophers and scientists were they to exhibit anything like the intellectual fever of the Renaissance.

Marsilio Ficino lectured from the professional chair on the occult virtues contained in amulets composed of the teeth and claws of animals. He changed the jewels in his rings to suit the impressions, whims, and moods of the day or the hour. Cristoforo Landino went so far as to "draw the horoscope of the Christian religion"; Francesco Guicciardini encountered aerial spirits. Nothing that Savonarola ever saw, or dreamed that he saw, equalled the visions, the dreams, the obsessions of Cardano, Porta, and Pomponaccio, those daring minds who, as Villari says, hewed out a path for Galileo "while apparently living in a state of delirium." The sight of a wasp flying into his room inspired Cardano to write whole pages of predictions, and we wonder that out of the chaos and psychological barbarism of the age a man like Galileo could have emerged sane and sound at last.

When Savonarola began to preach all Italy was in a state of ferment. Borgia was a papal Nero in Rome, Lorenzo de Medici a new Augustus in Florence, Borso a new Maecenas in Ferrara, but Savonarola in the pulpit of the Duomo shone like a koh-i-noor in a tiara of mock jewels and tawdry tinsel.

The wonder is not that they destroyed him at

the time they did, but that they ever permitted him the use of a public pulpit the second time. In the midst of a thousand confusions, hallucinations, dreams, theories, revivals, passions, occult insanity, scientific raving, and philosophical delirium, when everything the world ever knew was revived except the religion of St. Augustine, his denunciations fell like hot hail on the heads of prelates and courtiers, princes and peasants.

His complexion was dark, his grey eyes shone with a piercing brightness, his long, aquiline nose resembled a hook, which gave to his features something massive and menacing; he preached with the trenchant phraseology of a prophet.

What a difference there is between the eloquent speaker and the inspired preacher! The prophetic preacher inspires not only admiration and respect, but apprehension and awe, with something merging into the indefinable and the mystical; at certain moments he diffuses terror — *terrificam praedicationem egi*, as Savonarola declared when writing of himself. His age was a time in which political, religious, and social conditions became so confused that it required an intellectual giant to rise head and shoulders above all the greatest men in Italy and produce an impression at once profound and universal.

Men like Savonarola often put an end to tragedy by the consummation of the tragic. September 21st, 1494, was a memorable one in the history of Florence. It marked the beginning of the end for this wonderful man. Early on that day people began to arrive at the Duomo. They came from every direction, rich and poor, philosophers and courtiers, and at last the great edifice was filled with a multitude palpitating with suppressed emotion hardly able to endure the suspense created by so much hope, apprehension, doubt, and presentiments of coming calamity. When Savonarola mounted the pulpit he stood for a moment surveying the vast congregation like some revenant from the tombs; then, catching something of the nervous tension that prevailed everywhere around him, he shouted in a voice that rang through the vast edifice: "Ecce ego adducam aquas super terram!" The words came like a clap of thunder, and Pico Della Mirandola tells us he felt "a cold shiver" run through him. People left the Duomo "bewildered, speechless, and, as it were, half dead," and for days the terrible sermon was the talk of Florence.

May 19th to the 23rd witnessed the last act in the great tragedy. Frenzy was now added to

the prevailing insanity. The people, with but few exceptions, turned against their idol. When the Papal Commissioners entered Florence they were surrounded by the dregs of the people shouting, "Death to the Friar!" The Spanish desperado, Francesco Romolina, Bishop of Ilerda, answered back with a smile, "He shall die without fail!" In fact, the Pope had instructed Romolina to put Savonarola to death, "even were he another John the Baptist."

Again and again Savonarola was tortured on the rack. His replies were always the same; but each time they were falsified by the notaries. The inquisitors could do nothing with such a man. Then came the last scene of the last act. A scaffold was built in the public square; a gibbet was erected at one end. It resembled a cross with the upper part shortened. From it hung three chains and three halters. The halters were for Savonarola and his two companions; the chains were to hold their corpses suspended over the fire.

The blasphemies of the populace surpassed anything ever witnessed or imagined in Florence, and the savage cries of thousands of madmen resounded through the streets and the Piazza. The vilest criminals were released from prison in

order to add a more terrible frenzy to the general delirium. The three prisoners were ordered to be stripped of their robes, and they were led out in their tunics, barefooted. Savonarola was the last to be executed. He met his death amidst scenes of indescribable horror, and the Arrabbiati hired a mob of boys to shout, dance, and throw stones at the half-consumed victims.

FRANCE OLD AND NEW

THERE comes a time in the history of every nation when to the casual observer the changes that occur in the intellectual world seem sudden, paradoxical, and without apparent reason. I remember the time when "impersonality" was the leading note of French journalism; now the leading note is personal. Yet the change was not brought about suddenly. Journalism forced the French Academy to become more representative than it was under the Second Empire of Louis Philippe, when it accepted a critic like Sainte-Beuve and a poet like Lamartine while excluding Balzac. Jules Sandeau was the first novelist to take a seat among the so-called *Immortels*, and Prévost-Paradol the first journalist. Thus we see the Academy changes, although the process of change is slow, the spirit timid and the vision hazy. The new spirit in French literature and philosophy is more apparent and much more striking among the young writers, thinkers, and poets. Between these and the celebrities of middle age a great gulf is apparent. I cannot think of some of the older writers with-

but a feeling that they belong to a past epoch which is out of touch with the spirit and the aims of the rising generation and that still greater world lying beyond Paris, especially the world of creative thought embodied in Anglo-American productivity. For instance, a representative writer like Anatole France has no idea of the vastness and variety of the literary world beyond that of his own country. He is under the fatal illusion that writers and novelists of other countries look to Paris now as they did during the great days of the romantic movement, when translations of Hugo's *Les Misérables* appeared in all the principal languages as soon as the work was issued in French.

Most French writers of middle age are under the illusion that Paris must be as compelling to thinkers as it is to women in the world of fashion. But while Paris can still set the fashions for women, its most famous novelists occupy the position in the world of thought that the Know-Nothing Party occupied in politics some seventy years ago. For instance, the difference between the books of Anatole France and those of Pierre Loti is the difference between wit that charms and romance that fascinates. Both are limited to a world of action without ideas. Although the

greatest creator of "atmosphere" in the world of literature to-day, Pierre Loti is sure of nothing. His intellectual world is bounded on one side by atmosphere, on the other by sentiment; it is like a vague music which produces no psychic action in subconscious thought; he is as limited without wit and humour as Anatole France is in their full possession. The graces of style and humour are not adequate substitutes for the qualities we find in Hugo, Balzac, George Sand, and Flaubert; in their presence we walk not with the Graces but with the Gods. Their limitations were not apparent. The greatest writers of the Second Empire did not limit themselves to atmosphere, nor to feeling, nor to subtle expressions of psychological states, nor to characterisation. They were free to roam the world of will, intellect, imagination, and ideas. They lived in an Empire of creative thought, while the writers of the present live in a Republic of vacillating and negative sentiment. They of the past transcribed life; the Academicians of to-day record sensations and opinions, the things that hover on the surface of ideas. Anatole France, Pierre Loti, Maurice Barrès, and Marcel Prévost write about the things most appreciated by a people not ready for the fundamental principles of sound demo-

cracy on the one hand, and not ripe for imperial ascendancy on the other. Maurice Barrès has a charm all his own, yet he seldom succeeds in creating anything more than atmosphere, rare enough in itself and too difficult to be attained by any save writers of real distinction, but he is held in the same bondage as his gifted confrère, Anatole France. They walk within the limits of the same Parisian garden.

Le Jardin de Bérénice is made up of flowers too frail to flourish in the open air; they belong to the hot-house. Their odour is too delicate and subtle, and their form and nature too illusive, to be easily classified by the literary botanist. Maurice Barrès has achieved that rarest of all things, originality, and in him, as in Pierre Loti, Nature has done her best to offset the commonplace sentiments of the modern bourgeoisie by a manifestation of extreme refinement and delicacy from which all sense of power has vanished. Nothing more opposed to the bourgeois spirit could be imagined than the subtle irony of Anatole France, the romantic remoteness of Pierre Loti, and the quintessential refinement of Maurice Barrès. These and some other French writers of our time express themselves in a language which exhales a quality too subtle to be distinguished

by the typical Parisian of the Third Republic. The great writers of the Second Empire had positive and militant convictions. The greatest writers of the present take refuge in an aristocracy of atmosphere, in a world of intellectual exclusiveness, absolutely remote from republican tastes and democratic grooves of thought. Nothing could be less socialistic than the art of Anatole France, who passes for a socialist; nothing could be less popular than the writings of Pierre Loti, who is an officer in the Republican Navy; nothing more removed from the masses could be imagined than the writings of Maurice Barrès, who passes for a sincere patriot; while Paul Bourget, a Catholic, preaches against the things which the majority of Frenchmen uphold. I see no evidence that the French Academy is more democratic now than it was under the Empire. The more democratic the Government becomes, the more pronounced the line that separates the best writers from the sentiments and opinions of the people in the street. Things remain much as they were except for one exceedingly curious fact — the writers and thinkers who have become celebrated are more exclusive than were the great writers of the Second Empire, while at the same time the masses pride them-

selves on being more scientific and more democratic. Among the most gifted Academicians, feeling and atmosphere take the place of the creative and militant power displayed by Hugo, Balzac, and Flaubert; it is a world of sentiment opposed to action, refinement opposed to movement, imagination opposed to ideas.

If the most celebrated French writers are ultra-refined and negative, the younger writers are positive, self-assertive, and often militant. They too make frequent use of the personal pronoun, but with a different intention. Considered from a psychic view-point, the elderly critics are often vacillating and sometimes flippant. Very different are the young writers and critics; they are fearlessly independent and keenly analytical. They are cosmopolitan in certain directions, scientific, mystical, and philosophical. And yet they are further from the bourgeois mind than the middle-aged men of the Academy, more remote from the opinions and the sentiments of the man in the street. They display a spirit of research unknown to writers like Barrès, France, and Bourget. They have discovered worlds of sentiment and experience lying beyond the confines of Paris, for which they have to thank poets like Verhaeren and Whitman — admirably trans-

lated by M. Léon Bazalgette — and writers like Maeterlinck and Emerson. The tendency is toward a cosmopolitan culture, but I cannot see any evidence of a literary socialism; nor can I discover any evidence of philosophical collectivism among these young poets and writers. On the contrary, there is more individualism than ever before.

Since my first sojourn in Paris in 1869 I have witnessed the birth and death of several literary and artistic movements, among them "Parnasianism." The young poets of 1885 were not influenced by the "Parnassians," but by Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Verlaine, then Mallarmé, Laforgue, and some others. Out of these groups there arose some gifted men whose names are now celebrated among lovers of poetry: Moréas, the Greek, whom I used to see playing dominoes with a friend at the Café Voltaire in the 'eighties; and Henri de Regnier, whom I often met at the salon of Stéphané Mallarmé, and for whom I predicted a seat among the immortals; and later Paul Fort, to name but these out of a score. The real individualism began about 1885, and in 1893 M. Gabriel Vicaire, writing in the *Revue Hebdomadaire*, says of the new poets and their work: "Jamais pareille confusion ne s'était vue";

and M. Tristan Derème, writing in *Rhythm* for August, 1912, declares that in this respect nothing has been changed during the last nineteen years. There are no "schools," he says, but many doctrines, and even the theorists are among the first to oppose their own theories.

If, as David Hume said, there is a standard of taste, there are not many young writers in France who have any desire to seek a standard. The majority plump boldly for individuality. This, of course, is in defiance of all academical precedent, and the recent triumphs of Paul Fort, whose poetic output has but little affinity with any other French poetry, is a proof of the great change in the taste of the younger generation, M. Fort having recently received the title of "Prince des Jeunes" by a large majority of votes cast exclusively by writers and critics. The revolt against the old classical forms is even more pronounced than that headed by Hugo in 1830, but there is a difference. The present revolt is not led by any one man, but by a score. Young men are in revolt against academical restrictions and philosophical systems; and if the older men are excluded from the masses by literary refinement, the young men are equally excluded, but in another manner: and for another reason they are

interested in things which are too subtle and too abstract for the public, too psychic even for the academical. Many of these young men are bold enough to declare a positive belief in the things ignored or denied by the older writers like Anatole France and Pierre Loti. They are no longer afraid of ridicule. Independence is the keynote of their point of view, a free expression of their personal sentiments and their personal feelings their leading aim. This accounts for the difference of style and the multiplicity of individual beliefs. Among the young men there are those who might be taken for social reformers were it not that they are without system and without method. Others might be taken for pagan worshippers of Nature were it not that they have psychic convictions which give them a marked leaning towards Catholicism or Buddhism; while the number who are absorbed in the study of purely psychical matters, philosophical or experimental, surpasses the belief of persons who judge intellectual Paris by the things said and done by members of the French Academy. It cannot be too positively stated that at the present time there is hardly a member of that body who has any real influence on the minds of young men.

The young admire, but remain independent;

they read, but remain uninfluenced. The general tendency is towards a spiritualised action, independent of fixed literary forms, towards spiritual influence as opposed to mere sentiments and opinions; and in this tendency the present movement in no way resembles the Parnassian movement which was headed by the marmorean stoic, Leconte de Lisle. There is no room now for the stoical poet or the stoical thinker, although there are those who may be classed as philosophical mystics owing to the serene way in which they look at life, art, and nature. But the calm surface under which some of them work serves but to hide a spirit of ethical and scientific exploration and a consciousness of the tremendous mysteries that surround and envelop the soul, mysteries never so imperative in their demands as at this stage of human progress.

Naturally, where there are so many different temperaments at work trying to voice their convictions and impressions, incoherence must be a marked feature of much of the printed work. Anyone not thoroughly acquainted with the intellectual life of Paris would, after a casual glance at many of the books recently published, incline to the opinion that incoherence is the keynote to a universal cacophony of verbal sounds and philo-

sophical disorder. Had I not known Paris under the Second Empire and followed with a critical eye the literary, political, social, and artistic schools and movements that have come and gone since 1869, I might now be under the impression that the real France is represented by the elderly men like Bourget and Barrès, and that the young men are without influence because seemingly without order, method, or fixed purpose. But it is the appearance which deceives and confuses. Underneath the surface, beneath the incoherence and the contradiction, there may be discovered a spirit of unity compact enough to make the typical Academician pause and reflect on the changes due within the next ten years. The French Academy will soon cease to be the collective centre of writers of talent who are without positive convictions. The younger men will give to it a new philosophy and a psychic stimulus which will render materialism futile and sordid in comparison.

If anyone doubts the power and originality displayed among the ranks of young writers, poets, and thinkers in France to-day, I advise a careful perusal of M. Alexandre Mercereau's book, *La Littérature et les Idées Nouvelles*. For critical insight and discriminating judgment it

has not been surpassed by any work written in French during the past decade. Alexandre Mercereau is a young man, and in the short space of three or four years has *created* for himself a position in the intellectual world of Paris that seems to me unique. At the head of several groups of writers and artists, he is in a position to render a sane and just account of the general tendency of the young minds who are destined to exert a profound influence on literary thought in France during the next two or three decades.

To do justice to this book in a short *résumé* would be impossible. M. Mercereau is severely critical and yet surprisingly just, free from timid and vulgar prejudices, astonishingly cosmopolitan in his outlook on philosophical thought and literary productivity. Viewed in this light I consider him as representing the highest type of the new tendency in the world of intellectual expression in the France of our day. Without such writers and thinkers the outlook on the future would be gloomy indeed. His ascendancy means the introduction into French philosophy, art, and literature of a sound spirit of progress and an optimism devoid of sentimental weakness and vacillating opinion. Alexandre Mercereau is a writer and thinker with ideas of his own, and he

has rightly named his book *La Littérature et les Idées Nouvelles*. Here is a Parisian born who understands and appreciates foreign genius like Emerson, Whitman, Verhaeren, William James, and Ruskin, and his influence on the minds of young poets, writers, and philosophers has been widespread and potent.

THE NEW ERA

I

NATIONS develop according to fixed law, and we know what material progress and prosperity mean. The merest tyro can tell the difference between a country which has everything in its favour and one which has everything against it.

National misfortunes are never avoided by the excitement of change and the realism of war. On the contrary, misfortune follows in the train of every victory gained for the sake of personal aggrandisement. Seek where we may in history, the note of warning is there; the futility of dominion for the sake of dominion.

In order to see things as much as possible as they are, it is necessary to consider the lessons of history. What are the earliest signs of national decadence? How are they manifest to the minds of thinkers and philosophers? There is but one answer: in the disintegration of social, religious, and political forces. Wherever decadence has already set in, there you will find the hand on the

milestones pointing towards the vale of ease and lethargy, where the mind may dream in the lazy afternoon of life, and where the flight of time has no longer any meaning. The descent may be slow; it may proceed in a joyous and a merry mood, or it may laugh and weep by turns, but the descent never ceases.

Dickens depicted the happy-go-lucky mood of the typical Londoner of his time with masterly fidelity in photographic word-pictures, by which he unconsciously exposes the helplessness, the impotence, and the illusions of the people of London. The works of Dickens all point toward municipal and social decrepitude. The principal characters manifest a sentimental humor or a cynical selfishness which belongs to the early symptoms of national helplessness. They live in a world of illusions, never fully realising their condition as working, thinking entities. Micawber, among the people, is the living symbol of that undiscerning optimism, now so general, in which, at last, many leaders of state-craft and religion are steeped. Dickens depicted men and conditions as he found them, and the significance of his work lies not in his plots and his style, but in the faithfulness of his characterisation.

With the age of Dickens came dissensions in

the Established Church. Episcopalianism was undermined by the democratic spirit of the Salvation Army, while in the world of politics a band of men appeared whose chief business lay with the chimeras that hover about the horizon of the dusky future. They sought excitement and glory in distant countries, in questions and interests that in no way concerned the welfare of the people at home, in regions that touch the romantic, and in adventures that touch the fabulous.

A certain capricious humour, on the one hand, and a stoical demeanour on the other, precede and predict national disruption. Writers who foresee a decline often turn to cynicism or stoicism for relief. Grecian ascendancy was brought to an end not so much by what philosophers taught as by what the politicians and generals did. The cynics and the satirists, headed by Antisthenes and Aristophanes, appeared just at the time when Athens thought herself secure against civil and military decadence; but Alexander followed, with his feverish orgies of conquest in distant lands, and material disruption began.

In a like manner the humoristic and satirical element in Dickens and Thackeray marks an epoch in the social history of England. Here,

too, we find the spirit of melancholy seeking relief and distraction in comical description and cynical humour. For genius can do no more than observe and depict contemporary man. The great delineators and caricaturists of history invented nothing. There is no such thing as the creation of a type. The writers of every age, be they satirical, philosophical, or sentimental, are impressed and impelled by the persons and events of their own epoch. Thus we find Juvenal satirising decadent and Imperial Rome, while a little later Epictetus and Aurelius took refuge in stoical resignation. Under the Republic there was no need for stoicism and no occasion for satire. So, too, Epicurus appeared when Athens had witnessed her greatest triumphs, and not very long before Greece became a province of Rome.

Thinkers, prophets, philosophers, and novelists all make their appearance at the proper time. Men of genius never appear too soon or too late. Dickens represented the happy-go-lucky, sentimental humour of the people; Thackeray the cynicism and the snobbery of the middle classes; George Eliot the philosophical element of the cultured few. She represented modernised stoicism. It was Seneca and Aurelius clothed in Victorian romance; it was the science and resignation

of Epicurus and Epictetus brought down to our very doors, speaking through the illusions of imperial power, evading to the last the secret presentiment of social and political disruption.

Thus we find ourselves face to face with two formidable signs, the like of which Europe has not seen since the beginning of the Roman decline: a cheap stoicism and puerile cynicism. These symptoms of decadence, long apparent in Continental Europe, are now palpably visible in England, where cynicism has assumed a form that is almost devoid of sensibility, and where pessimism is attaining the last limits of moral resignation.

In the Elizabethan age there was no place for the cynical, the satirical, and the stoical. An age of action and progress is an age of hope, and the idea that poets, writers, and artists spring up here and there like spurts of capricious Nature is a superstition. Nowhere is there a manifestation of intellect which has not a direct bearing on the political and social world of fact and experience. Blind though the forces of Nature appear to be, still there are laws regulating these forces. The optimistic prophecies of Walt Whitman, for instance, were no haphazard production of a dreamer, but of one reasoning from cause to effect

in a country teeming with intellectual and physical energy. Had Whitman produced his poems in London they would have mirrored the lethargy and the indifference of the larger part of its inhabitants.

The art-world has expressed the mood of the passing dispensation. Burne-Jones and Rossetti were masters of the illusive, the immaterial. The sadness which crowns the summit of achievement, the melancholy coeval with perfection attained, the longing for the things that are passed, all this was transcribed on canvas with singular beauty and vividness. This is why the pictures of these masters give the impression of artistic dreams, of something belonging to another age.

In contrast to this we have the art of the caricaturist and the satirical symbolist, typifying an age of cynical callousness. In England and France caricaturists are not only doing with the pencil what Dickens and Thackeray did with the pen, but they have arrived at a far closer intimacy with human deceits and chimerical ambitions. Never in the history of English art has anything appeared at all comparable to the drawings of the late Aubrey Beardsley. With an artistic insight into the social foibles and the follies of the epoch he added something that went straight to

the heart of character, and by a sort of Mephistophilian penetration depicted the naked soul of the time. This, too, was an art that attained the apex of delicacy and precision, a perfection which laughed at perfection, a consciousness turned in upon itself, mindful at once of power and decline.

And it is not only art that has furnished bitter examples of the breaking up of old ideals and old systems. Music has been evoked in the cause of sarcasm, irony, and ridicule. In the world of music we are confronted with the trivial on the one hand, and on the other with the Wagnerian symbols of the futile and the chimerical. The first stands for the persiflage of the masses, the second represents a hopeless struggle against the irremediable. Wagner's final pronouncement is Renunciation. Parsifal, for example, means negative pessimism. Parsifal renounces the struggle for life, and this, after all, is the Schopenhauerian philosophy distilled into music. An earthly Nirvana is evoked by a combined musical and verbal magic in which all the arts have a place, in which illusion is followed by disenchantment and weariness. Wagner's work symbolises the disruption of the old civilisation. He scaled the heights of long-tried systems, and from the last pinnacle sounded the bugle-call of disillusion and retreat.

The call was heard by Germany, France, and England, who recognised in it a solace for error and deception. When, in "Parsifal," the walls of the palace of illusion fall to the ground with a crash, something more than mere personal disenchantment is symbolised. The falling of the walls of the house of pleasure and sense typifies the dislocation of every system and thing founded on material dominion. How comes it that such a work was produced during the ascendancy of a man like Bismarck? Genius everywhere has an ascendancy over all other manifestations of intellect, and its business is to see as well as to act.

II

When we leave the world of art and music and enter that of the drama we are confronted once more by a repetition of the signs and symptoms of cynical indifference on one hand and sentimental weakness on the other. Mr. Pinero produces stage dialogues so true to contemporary life that many of his plays are masterpieces of their kind. And they represent social apathy, ironical humour, trivial ambitions, and vulgar passions. He possesses one of the most observing and penetrating minds that ever depicted the

follies of the human heart. In his plays, men and women of the world see themselves as in a mirror. And they are at once nonchalant and eager, frivolous and tragic, witty and pathetic. Their wealth is as millstones, and their titles hindrances, yet, from an instinct born of degeneracy, they seek greater wealth and higher titles, and the dramatic ensemble represents a cynical and callous class of people, born without the instinct of affection and bred without distinction of feeling. Mind and heart are wanting here for the reason that in the typical society of the day there is no sense of the human and confraternal.

In the plays of Mr. Sydney Grundy and others the same frankness and fidelity to the spirit of the time are manifest. On the other hand, there is the romantic drama, meaningless and impotent. If anyone doubts this it is only necessary to consider for a moment the negative results of *The Sign of the Cross*. The very success of this play attested its impotence as a religious factor. The emotion which it caused was another symptom of dramatic and religious hysteria. That play galvanised the nerves of a people long tired of the ordinary religious emotions, of a people fatigued by the monotony of chapel-going and Salvation Army gymnastics, of a people in need

of a glimpse of the pagan arena, a cry from the dungeons of the Roman Coliseum, the mingled horrors and splendours of Imperial and neurotic Rome; in need, above all things, of the spectacular, the poignant, and the puerile.

The masses would seek relief in signs and in symbols, in promises of to-morrow, in shifting scenes and varying movement, in panoramic and illusive pleasures which keep the mind from the real cause of misery and the heart from the real cause of sorrow. How to escape from the reality is the one consuming thought of the hour. Because, hidden deep down in the recesses of human nature, there dwells a consciousness of decay and helplessness.

This consuming desire to escape is the cause of romantic adventure, symbolical idealism, feverish commercial activity, inane social ambitions, political excitement, spectacular show, and the chimeras of war. Here lies the inner and secret meaning of that movement known as the Celtic Renaissance. After Dickens and Thackeray, George Eliot and George Meredith, after Browning, Tennyson, and Swinburne, after three centuries of literary glory unequalled in the history of the world we arrive at a period when aspiration, sentiment, and emotion assume a

mystical and symbolical form. A climax has been attained in the long series of literary schools. But in the realm of British ascendancy it means the passing from a dream of contentment to a consciousness the reality of which is again screened by a veil of poetic and allegorical illusion. For this literary perfection means that hope and faith have reached a barrier, and a refuge is sought in a region of symbolical mysticism, pure and noble in itself, but still quixotic and allusive.

If Mr. Yeats willingly seeks the legendary and the symbolical, Mr. Kipling tries to escape by means of the active. But while Mr. Yeats takes refuge in a world of poetic symbols which he has created for himself, Mr. Kipling, without knowing it, is living in a fool's paradise. The stimulant of Mr. Kipling's verse and prose may be likened to the spurs applied to a tired horse. His writings stimulate, but, like all stimulants, they do no more than make the patient think himself stronger. In reality there has been no strength gained. The heart of the Empire is London, and he has left it untouched. He has dissected the veins, sinews, and arteries of the Empire, but the heart he has scarcely seen. He has been deceived by appearances. At a distance everything looks promising; the young countries have before them a great

future, and action is visible everywhere without an immediate danger of reaction. He is good enough to bid the patient at home look beyond himself and his surroundings for relief, and he bids him hope without a shadow of practical or material benefit. For the young emigrant this is well; for the overgrown, lethargic metropolis it is optimistic poison. It means that for the home habitant of the British Empire fiction is offered and accepted in lieu of the real and the practical; it means that the foreign wine of life is preferable to bread made at home; it means joy for the robust young adventurer who leaves England never to return, but for the Mother Country it means decay and disaster. For while Mr. Kipling plants one tree he eradicates two old ones.

We have, therefore, two forces in literature which demonstrate by a sort of prescience the extremity of material dominion. The Celtic Renaissance is an indirect proclamation by symbols of the close of the old dispensation, while the writers of actuality announce the end by going direct to fact and experience, despising political pretension and optimistic superstition. And thus from the region of poetic intuition we have a prophetic cry, and from the plane of actual fact

the voice of the world-wise seer. In the writings of Robert Louis Stevenson we have romantic idealism, which was this gifted author's mode of escape from dying systems. Romantic adventure, romantic action, rendered as real as possible; a never-ending bustle and movement typifying everything modern in adventure and suggesting everything mediæval in spirit! With a mind at once critical and philosophical he refused to look at things as they existed in his native country. An escape was eagerly sought, until at last it was found in remoteness and seclusion; yet still in a sort of romantic action.

It is this rush to escape from the pain and the turmoil of monotony and routine which constitutes the striking similarity between Mr. Kipling and Robert Louis Stevenson. Notwithstanding the difference between the culture of Stevenson and the rugged power of Mr. Kipling, they belong to the same school. But a wide gulf separates Mr. Kipling from Dickens. For Dickens, as well as Thackeray and George Eliot, dealt with the life and manners of their own people and country. Mr. Kipling repudiates London. He leaves the Mother Country with as much deliberation as an emigrant would who no longer has any binding sympathy with her customs or

her people. He flees the thing that is, to seek the thing that is not.

It is astounding that in the hour of need, when London and the great cities of England are swarming with poverty-stricken and helpless people, at a time when all the signs of unrest and disintegration are plainly manifest, literature of this kind can not only gain the popular ear, but that of the classes which govern. It is not too much to assert that the majority of popular English authors belong to the chimerical school. The reading public, caring only to escape from the actual through the open door of legend and make-believe, mistake the mythical for the mystical, so that what is true in the political world is also true in the world of literature. If the governing powers find momentary escape in the excitement of sport and luxurious living, the reading public finds a narcotic in fictional nonsense, one popular novelist going so far as to pack three dukes into one novel, and this at a time when we are asked to believe in the great vogue of democratic ideals. It is no wonder, then, that the middle-class mind of the present day rests secure in the fool's paradise of popular romance and popular plays.

III

It took three centuries for the hand of progress to mark the high noon of Empire, which arrived with Elizabeth. Athens and Rome both followed the same route marked by the same inexorable law. We are at the close of a dispensation which has lasted for six hundred years.

The Elizabethan era was one of proud rulers, proud adventurers, and proud moralists. Vanity and sentimentality were crushed under the power of authority or held in abeyance under the weight of dignity. Work and faith are supreme in an age of pride, scepticism and pretence in an age of vanity. Proud nations are unconscious of the thing that braces them to perpetual victory, and when pride becomes self-conscious vanity sets in and decline is certain.

National security leads to individual indolence, the delusion of collective unity, and the illusions of personal efficiency. Once on the decline, the optimist begins to boast. Nationally, it is the optimist who is negative, the pessimist who is positive — he is the watcher on the tower.

Vain optimism leads to vainglory, and the result is sentimentality. The sentimental has ruled Christendom for nearly two thousand years. But

there were periods when it did not rule in the world of politics. Bonaparte and Bismarck rose superior to all manifestations and surprises of the sentimental; yet England remains chained to this weakness in politics, in religion, in art, in literature, in music, in charity, and utilitarianism. From being weak and effeminate the sentimental has now become threatening and vicious. Its politics is only rivalled by its pulpit. Many of the churches are governed by men who lack the courage to preach punishment, by agnostics who have long parted with the anchor of faith, clutching at the last straws of hope in a sea of conflicting and baffling currents.

Examine the *raison d'être* of the persistent conservation of so many illusions. The reason is to be found in the seeming security bestowed by vast territorial possessions and the false intellectuality bestowed by vast material wealth. England has been dreaming ever since the destruction of the Spanish Armada. During the Napoleonic game on the chess-board of Europe, when crowned heads were the pawns, England felt some slight emotional shocks while watching the players. Waterloo was an earthquake only felt in England as a tremor. It was hardly more than the excitement of a Derby witnessed at a

great distance. The illusions of security augmented with the capture of Napoleon. The Titan dead, nothing remained to menace the nation. Comfort now slipped into the lap of luxury, ease into the lap of indolence, opulence changed to arrogant optimism, and religion to a species of hypocrisy which passed the bounds of foreign credibility.

Micawbers made their appearance on the one hand and predatory Shylocks on the other. At this time the German States were little more than coloured blots on the map situated between France and Russia, which made the map interesting in the eyes of the sentimental and the romantic. France was a nation that only needed patting on the back; Italy a place for pleasure tours; America a combination of wilderness and negroes.

Into this desert of chimeras came the scientific agnostic, a personage unknown elsewhere in the whole world of learning. From the laboratory he entered the pulpit, and, like a human wolf in sheep's clothing, preached a religion of flattery to sentimental Red Ridinghoods in the front pews and blue-stockings sceptics looking down from the gallery. British science here gave the lie to British optimism, because agnosticism is the bivouac of tired minds in a wilderness of illusions.

In a dying dispensation everything partakes of doubt and fatigue. Our philosophy is now a hybrid jumble of physical science, psychic delusions, sentimental morality, and pusillanimous patriotism. We are intellectually incapable of grappling with the draconian maxims of the Continental giants whose works have freed Germany and France from the incubus of ethical lethargy and intellectual senility. At a time when the leading thinkers of Continental Europe have accepted a positive philosophy of life we are steeped in the old mode — the sentimental rules us with an iron hand, the yoke of the negative drags us to the gutter of intellectual pauperism. We have no voice in the counsels of Continental thinkers. Darwin discovered a path into a new country; foreign philosophers and scientists have found the treasures. These treasures we repudiate with the scorn which could only have originated in a species of insanity caused by perverted pride and degenerate optimism.

A score of isms unheard of in France, Germany, Italy, and Austria flourish, in the hour when every nerve of the national body-politic ought to be strained towards grappling with the impending crisis. These isms have turned us into a psychological paradox; we flirt with science,

dabble in art, and use religion as a fashionable function.

Authority has gone from Episcopalianism and power from the Dissenters. Bishops apologise before preaching to unwilling congregations. Where would our clergy be without the faults and the vices of the poor? Without the slums there would be nothing to contrast with Imperial splendour, without our rags nothing to contrast with the Royal ermine.

A great gulf separates us from Continental thought. It is forty years since we ceased to bear any relationship with the German people. To-day we stand separated by philosophy, separated by militarism, by social aims and material watch-words. The closing dispensation finds us between two stools. The question of disarmament is in itself a sign of sentimental degeneracy. The fact that we possess men like Andrew Carnegie, who are naïve enough to cry "Peace, peace!" before the Teutonic Juggernaut, ought to be enough to bring the most wavering doubters to their senses. It requires Anglo-maniacal effrontery to broach the subject of disarmament when dealing with a people like the Germans. Whence comes this effrontery? From ignorance of the Bismarckian ambition, ignorance of the Nietzschean philoso-

phy, ignorance of the tendency of German youth to these ambitions and ideals, ignorance of everything pertaining to the Teutonic race of to-day.

Germany entered upon a new era in 1866, when she defeated Austria. The Imperial seal of blood and iron was affixed to this epoch on the day Sedan capitulated in 1870. Ten years later a philosopher arose who imposed a new scale of moral values to the iron mandates of Bismarck and made it impossible for the German people ever again to think, write, or act in the sentimental mode.

In consequence of these facts, Germany is forty years ahead of England and America, and we are still in the agonies of the dying dispensation. We are about to enter a phase of existence so new, so strange, so unlike, so fantastically paradoxical, so extravagantly unhistorical, so ironically bewildering that it is hardly possible to bring home to the minds of the unlettered masses anything like an adequate sense of the situation.

For good or for bad, for better or for worse, the dawn of the new dispensation will see China a military nation. The Juggernaut of events will not stop to persuade, will not stop to argue, will not stop to sentimentalise, will not stop to reason. It will move on, drawn by the unnamed beasts

whose horns are sealed with the fulness of Time, whose hoofs are shod with bands of steel driven by the force of destiny. Multitudes await its coming, and the question arises how many will prostrate themselves before the sinister car completes one full circle. It is destiny we now have to face. But the people, like the people of every other country, will accept, at the appointed hour, the mandates of the unwritten and universal law. The characteristic feature of the new dispensation will be whatever the dominant European forces impose; that will be transmitted and transfused into us. It is not a question of being conquered. The new era will not conquer in the old way. It will come with the impulsion of a rising tide, which gradually overwhelms, submerges, transforms. There will be no second edition of the Elizabethan or the Victorian era. Conditions will change to such a degree that in nothing will the coming dispensation resemble anything in the old. Sects, parties, and individuals will be swept along with the tidal wave of Continental transformation, and imperative necessity will place a dominant yoke on the old characteristics of habit and opinion. Men will cease to say "I believe." They will bow before the inexorable. The nation will be drawn by superior material

forces or driven by crushing material forces. The imperative will rule. Peremptory mandates will not leave a niche for the lodgment of the sentimental and the vainglorious. We shall no longer resemble men who are living on the interest of their capital, not being permitted to live bolstered up on the illusions produced by past glory.

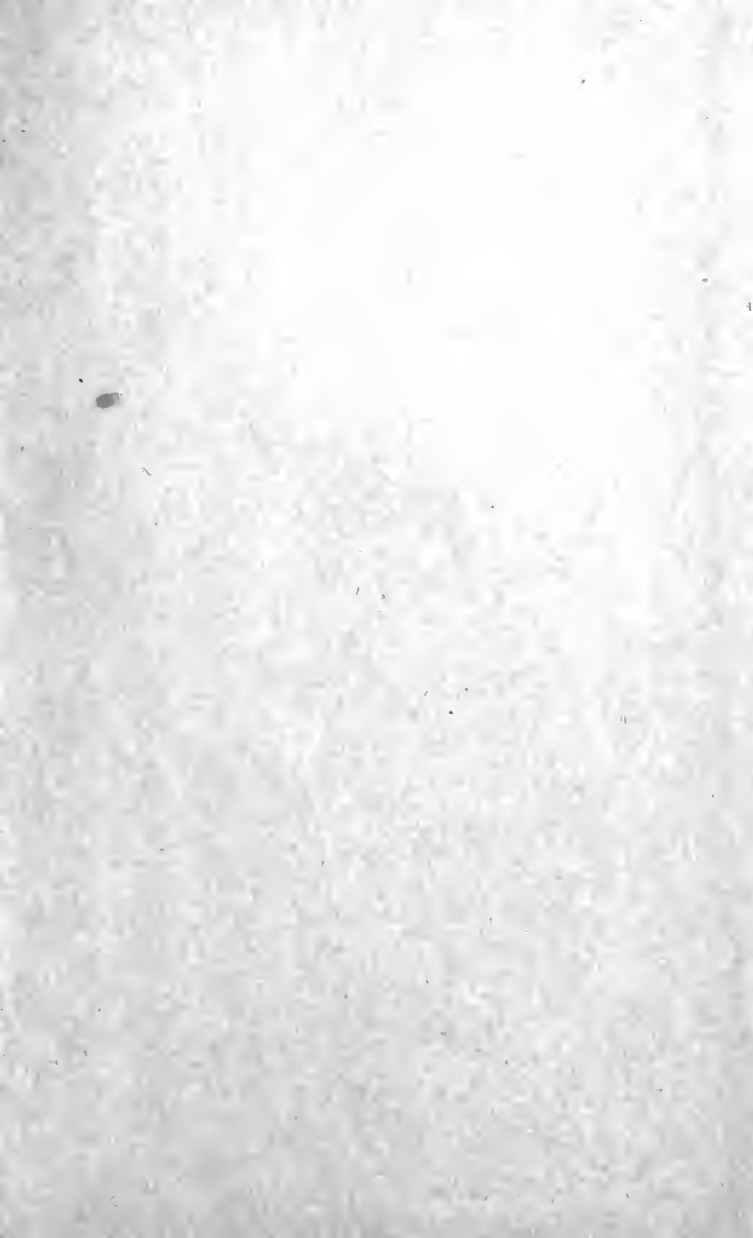
In the coming dispensation there will be no place for the old illusions, science having filled their place with inevitable fact. The awakening will be more bewildering than that of optimistic France in 1870. Millions will rub their eyes and ask questions no one will have the time to answer. Utopists with sentimental schemes for the millennium by Act of Parliament will find themselves swept off their feet by the tidal wave of action, in which words, opinions, personal likes and personal idiosyncrasies will have neither weight nor meaning. For the first time since the reign of Henry the Eighth authority will dominate both the masses and the classes, and under such a régime a duke will have no more influence than a smart soldier of the ranks. The question will be not "Who are you?" but "What do you know?" A few iron-willed men will assume control, and their judgment will become law. Necessity and

action will absorb parties as a sponge absorbs water.

The new dispensation will be a forcing time, not only for grains and fruits, but for individuals. It will be an age of applied science, but out of science a new spiritual element will spring forth, which in turn will dominate the material. The new era will bring with it a spiritual renaissance and the unity of the Anglo-American people.

3477-4

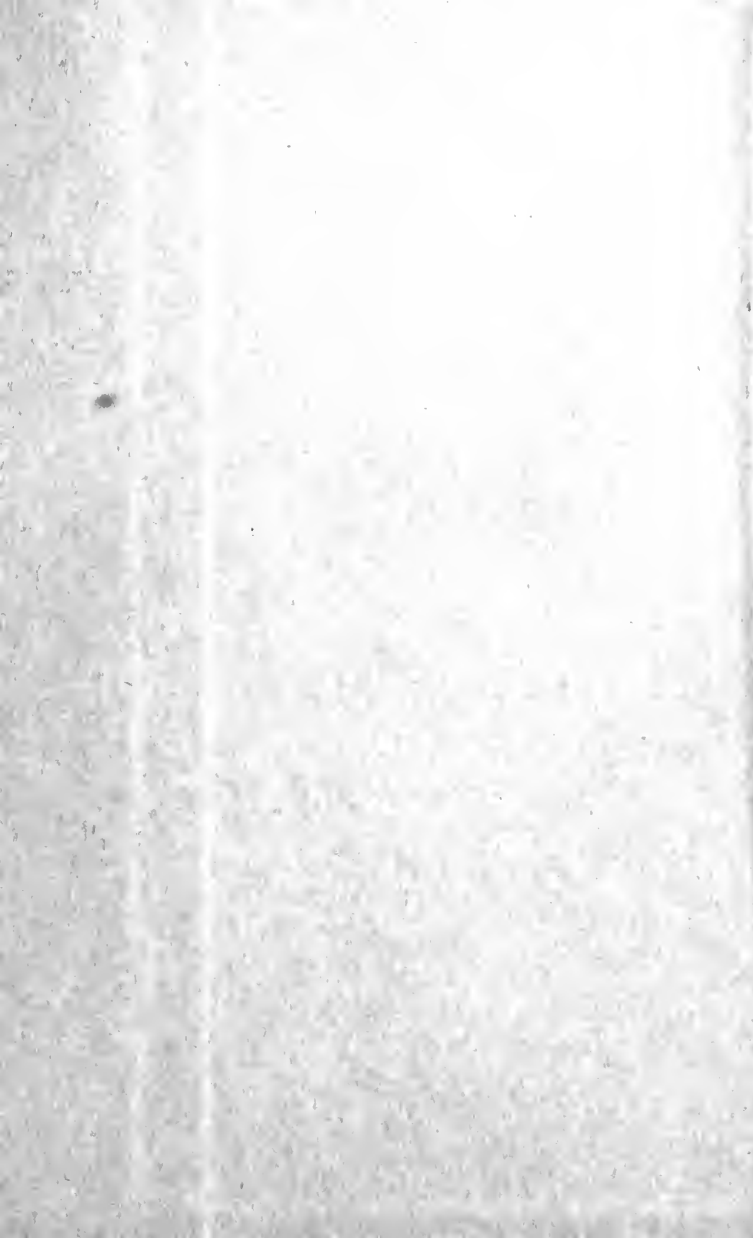




Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: April 2009

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN COLLECTIONS PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 492 534 8